

ROCK OF AGES  
Other foundation can  
no man lay  
A RANSOM FOR ALL

"Watchman, What of the Night?  
The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah

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"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot  
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what he will  
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them  
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

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Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism, snail or snake). . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24: 33; Mark 13: 29; Luke 21: 32.

## THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

**THIS** journal is one of the prime factors or instruments in the system of Bible instruction, or "Seminary Extension", now being presented in all parts of the civilized world by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, chartered A. D. 1884, "For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge". It not only serves as a class room where Bible students may meet in the study of the divine Word but also as a channel of communication through which they may be reached with announcements of the Society's conventions and of the coming of its traveling representatives, styled "Pilgrims", and refreshed with reports of its conventions.

Our "Berean Lessons" are topical rehearsals or reviews of our Society's published STUDIES most entertainingly arranged, and very helpful to all who would merit the only honorary degree which the Society accords, viz., *Verbi Dei Minister* (V. D. M.), which translated into English is *Minister of God's Word*. Our treatment of the International Sunday School Lessons is specially for the older Bible students and teachers. By some this feature is considered indispensable.

This journal stands firmly for the defense of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated—redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all" (1 Peter 1:19; 1 Timothy 2:6). Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Peter 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to "make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed".—Ephesians 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us to understand his utterances. Its attitude is not dogmatic, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made to facilitate such testing.

### TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the church is "the temple of the living God", peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the Chief Corner Stone of his temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come "to all people", and they find access to him.—1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; Ephesians 2:20-22; Genesis 28:14; Galatians 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones", "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Revelation 15:5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world", "in due time".—Hebrews 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partakers of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4.

That the present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace: to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age.—Ephesians 4:12; Matthew 24:14; Revelation 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial kingdom, the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church, when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35.

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### KINEMO MACHINES AND PICTURES

As heretofore announced in THE WATCH TOWER, Brother Driscoll has been perfecting a miniature moving picture machine for the purpose of projecting pictures in homes, schoolhouses, etc. Agreeable to the former notice in THE WATCH TOWER, we publish the following notice, which we have received from Brother Driscoll. All communications concerning these machines and pictures should be addressed as indicated below:

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# The WATCH TOWER

## AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

VOL. XLIII

MAY 1, 1922

No. 9

### THE GENTILE TIMES

*"And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins."—  
Leviticus 26: 18.*

**A**NOTHER test is on. Who will weather the storm? It is a test of faith. "According to your faith be it unto you." During the time of the harvest there have been special tests of faith at fixed intervals. Call to mind the shaking that came with the discussion, in this journal, of the covenants. Then came the shaking relating to the Vow; then followed another shaking with the fuller discussion of consecration and justification; then followed the test concerning the Seventh Volume; and then another test in 1918 concerning the harvest and the work. From all these fiery tests the greater majority of the consecrated have emerged unscathed; but some, because of bitterness of heart, have become blind of vision, gone out of the truth and back into the world, being led away by the error of the wicked. There is a reason for this. Let us examine the facts concerning the reason.

Lucifer was a creature of light and power and of great beauty. Beholding his own beauty and being impressed with his own wisdom and ability, he concluded to put into operation a plan of his own, different from God's arrangement and the carrying out of which would make Lucifer great like unto Jehovah. In his heart he became disloyal to God, turned away from the light and truth, and became the wicked one. Probably his intentions were good when he first began to exercise his wisdom and to be impressed with his own importance. Ambition turned him blind and embittered his heart. Since then he has sought by fraud and deceit and other wrongful means to turn all away from Jehovah. God has permitted this deflection of the great and brilliant creature Lucifer to be made prominent in his Word for some good purpose. The evident purpose is, that all of his other intelligent creatures might learn the proper lesson.

#### AMBITION'S FRUITAGE

Ever and anon there arises some one who has been following the Lord, for a time at least, who possesses a measure of beauty of mind and character, and possibly of person—one who takes himself too seriously. He succeeds in convincing himself that the Lord has appointed him to look after things divine and to lead God's people

out of the wilderness. As he goes on in this way, he becomes convinced in his own mind that the Lord made a mistake in selecting Brother Russell as that servant; and this doubt leads to the conclusion later on that Brother Russell was not "that servant" at all. He begins to doubt what Brother Russell wrote, and so expresses himself. Now he disregards the Lord's Word, which says: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Thus disregarding this admonition, and being led on by the subtle influence of the adversary, he convinces himself that it is his solemn duty to undo all the things that Brother Russell taught and to turn the church's vision in the right way. He prepares a manuscript and charts in support of same, setting forth his views. Submitting it to others and being advised that his thoughts are wrong, he construes this to mean a desire to prevent him from permitting his light to shine, and disregards such advice. So thoroughly is he impressed that he must thus teach the people and undo that which has been taught, that he begins the publication of his thoughts and to send these forth to the consecrated. His arguments seem plausible to those who make only a superficial examination, and especially to those who have forgotten what they were taught. Doubt arises in the minds of some who thus read. Now the test is on.

#### QUESTIONS DISCUSSED YEARS AGO

About a year ago there began some agitation concerning chronology, the crux of the argument being that Brother Russell was wrong concerning chronology and particularly in error with reference to the gentile times. More than fifteen years ago these questions were raised and thrashed out, and so clearly did Brother Russell set forth the facts in Volume II of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* and in *THE WATCH TOWER*, that it seemed a waste of time and space now to further discuss the matter in this journal; and the subject was dismissed on that ground.

Seeds of doubt once sown and permitted to germinate in the heart grow until the doubter turns to agnosticism

or positive opposition. If the person holding the doubt takes himself too seriously, thinking more highly of his own importance than he should think (Romans 12: 3), or where he permits bitterness to abide in his heart, darkness is almost certain to ensue.

Agitation concerning the error in chronology has continued to increase throughout the year, and some have turned into positive opposition to that which has been written. This has resulted in some of the Lord's dear sheep becoming disturbed in mind and causing them to inquire, Why does not THE WATCH TOWER say something? Is not its silence tantamount to an admission that our chronology is wrong?

From time to time the question of publishing something in this journal has been considered. Each time the Lord has seemed to interfere, until now. Why should such be the case? Our opinion is that the Lord has permitted the delay in the reviewing of the question of chronology since the agitation was begun in order to give those who had the wrong condition of heart an opportunity to manifest themselves, and to give the others an opportunity to have their faith tested.

#### FAITHFULNESS IS LOYALTY

To be faithful means to be loyal. To be loyal to the Lord means to be obedient to the Lord. To abandon or repudiate the Lord's chosen instrument means to abandon or repudiate the Lord himself, upon the principle that he who rejects the servant sent by the Master thereby rejects the Master.

There is no one in present truth today who can honestly say that he received a knowledge of the divine plan from any source other than by the ministry of Brother Russell, either directly or indirectly. Through his prophet Ezekiel Jehovah foreshadowed the office of a servant, designating him as one clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side, who was delegated to go throughout the city (Christendom) and comfort those that sighed by enlightening their minds relative to God's great plan. Be it noted that this was a favor bestowed not by man, but by the Lord himself. But in keeping with the Lord's arrangement he used a man. The man who filled that office, by the Lord's grace, was Brother Russell.

Jesus clearly indicated that during his second presence he would have amongst the church a faithful and wise servant, through whom he would give to the household of faith meat in due season. The evidence is overwhelming concerning the Lord's second presence, the time of the harvest, and that the office of "that servant" has been filled by Brother Russell. This is not man-worship by any means. It matters not who Charles T. Russell was—whether he was a doctor, a hod-carrier or a seller of shirts. St. Peter was a fisherman; St. Paul a lawyer. But these matters are immaterial. Above all, these men were the chosen vessels of the Lord. Regardless of his earthly avocation, above all, Brother Russell was the Lord's servant. Then to repudiate him and

his work is equivalent to a repudiation of the Lord, upon the principle heretofore announced.

#### FULL TEST OF FAITH

But every one who has a desire in his heart to shine at the expense of the reputation of the Lord's chosen servant, or who meditates the building for himself of a reputation amongst men that it may be said of him that he was particularly wise—such a one is almost certain to have an opportunity to attempt to realize his desires. Every one of the consecrated who has the inclination of heart to follow such self-constituted leaders is almost certain to have an opportunity to have a full test of his faith. For this cause there arise from time to time conditions which operate as a test of the faith of God's people.

Again the test is on. This time it is on chronology. And following this lead, it will be found that the road of doubt and opposition will carry one into doubting the second presence of the Lord, the time of the harvest, the office of "that servant" and the one who filled it, the evidences of the end of the world, the inauguration of the kingdom, the nearness of the restoration of man, and finally to a repudiation of God and our Lord Jesus Christ and the blood with which we were bought.

The opening crevice for the enemy thus to blast at the Rock of Ages is now made by the raising of the question concerning the gentile times. Some thus impressed with their own wisdom begin to hold forth the argument that the gentile times began with the beginning of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar in the year 625 B. C.; hence could not end in 1914; hence the present work of the church is wrong, and the course of action should be reversed. The holding of such views blinds one to the present events, minimizes the importance of the tremendous evidences of the end of the age, causes those who have been active to cease to be witnesses for the Lord, and being thus led away by the error of the wicked one, they fall away from steadfastness.—2 Peter 3: 17, 18.

With gratitude to God for what he has done for us, with supreme love for him, with a heart's sincere desire to be led by him, with humble and sincere supplication that he hold us by the hand and keep us in the light, let us come to an honest examination of the facts.

#### "TIMES"

The word "gentile" is a term used to distinguish the nations of earth aside from the Jews, the Jews being God's chosen people, with whom he made a covenant. The "gentile times" is a period of time during which the gentiles shall exercise imperial or kingly power over the affairs of earth. God constituted Israel his chosen people above all other peoples. (Exodus 19: 6) This favor they were to enjoy provided they remained obedient to the Lord Jehovah. For their disobedience he permitted them to be punished from time to time, the punishment being inflicted by other nations. (Judges



3:14; 4:2, 3; 10:7, 8; 13:1) Jehovah warned the nation of Israel that should they fail to profit by these chastisements thus inflicted, he would punish them *seven times*. "If ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins."—Leviticus 26:18.

A "time", as used in the Scriptures, has reference to a year, either symbolic or literal. Symbolic time is reckoned according to a lunar year of 360 days. (See A-89.) The rule for counting symbolic time is a day for a year. (Numbers 14:33, 34; A-91) One *time* being 360 years in duration, seven *times* would be a period of 2520 years.

With Israel God established the true religion, commanding that the people should worship him and have no other god. (Exodus 20:1-3) Satan, the prince of devils and the ruler of the gentile nations, established with those nations the false religion; and the gentiles were taught to worship devils, symbolized in various forms and images. Jehovah erected a shield for the children of Israel by providing in his law the severest penalty for worshipping devils. Time and time again Israel went off after the false religion, worshipping the demon gods; and for this they were punished.—Leviticus 26:1-16.

It must be apparent to all careful students that the period of the gentile times would be a period of great punishment to Israel, and that that period of time must begin with some specific punishment marking the beginning of the gentile times definitely and must continue for a definite period of seven times, or 2520 years. The question at issue is, When did this period of the gentile times begin and when is the end thereof? These facts cannot be proven by profane history, because such history is made by men who acted as agents of Satan's empire and hence were unreliable; for Satan is the father of lies. (John 8:44) Let everyone who wishes to be bound by such authority do so; but surely all Christians will want to stand by the Bible.

An absolutely safe rule to follow, therefore, is this: Where the testimony of the Bible is clear and plain, follow that always. Where secular or profane history is corroborated by the Bible, such testimony may be considered for what it is worth as cumulative evidence. Where secular or profane history is contrary to the Bible, follow it never.—Romans 4:3.

#### OPPONENTS' CONCLUSIONS

To avoid any confusion we will state that the dates B.C. in this article signify the number of years before Christ, as we have been accustomed to stating them; exactness might, however, sometimes call for the previous year, as the *name* of the year, as distinguished from the *number* of full years elapsed.

Those who have attempted in recent months to prove that the chronology as prepared and published by Brother Russell is wrong make statements not only contradicting Brother Russell, but contradictory in themselves.

Some of the Lord's dear children have permitted these contradictory and conflicting statements to disturb their minds. This has been the result of a failure to study carefully the evidence as set forth in the Bible and in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We speak of them here as opponents because opposed to or contradicting the chronology we have. The conclusion of some of these is as follows, to wit: "That the divine lease of power to the gentiles began with the accession of Nebuchadnezzar to the throne in the year 606 B. C.; hence the accession of Nebuchadnezzar to the throne marks the beginning of the gentile times, and the 2520 years therefore would run out in 1914". Again they state that "Zedekiah was taken captive and Jerusalem fell in the year 587 B. C.; thus showing that the full end of the gentile times and the fall of gentile governments is indicated to take place in 1934". (It will be observed that this position is contradictory within itself.)

Another of the opponents says that Nebuchadnezzar began his reign in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; that the servitude of Israel to Babylon began the same year; that the desolation began in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar; that the fourth year of Jehoiakim and the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was 606 B. C.; and that the desolation began nineteen years thereafter, which shows the overthrow of Christendom in 1933.

Each of these opponents claims that the position taken is supported by secular history and that therefore Brother Russell was mistaken in his conclusions about the chronology. They also admit that *their method of counting time changes the period of the kings* from 513 years to 494 years.

#### BROTHER RUSSELL'S CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of Brother Russell, reached from a careful examination of the Scriptures, is succinctly stated in Volume II of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 79, as follows:

"The Bible evidence is clear and strong that the 'times of the gentiles' is a period of 2520 years, from the year B. C. 606 to and including A. D. 1914. This lease of universal dominion to gentile governments, as we have already seen, began with Nebuchadnezzar—not when his reign began, but when the typical kingdom of the Lord passed away, and the dominion of the whole world was left in the hands of the gentiles. The date for the beginning of the gentile times is, therefore, definitely marked as at the time of the removal of the crown of God's typical kingdom from Zedekiah, their last king."

A careful examination of the Biblical proof herein set forth demonstrates that in their position on chronology the opponents of Brother Russell are wrong, and that Brother Russell was right. In arriving at a conclusion, Brother Russell did not always state each step in detail; but his conclusions are plainly and definitely stated and are based upon the Scriptures. We must indulge the presumption, therefore, that he pursued a sound course of reasoning in arriving at these conclusions if we find the conclusions are correct.

We now propose to prove that the gentile times, a period of 2520 years, began in the year 606 B. C. and ended in the fall of the year 1914; and that the ouster proceedings began promptly thereafter and on time. In making this proof we rely upon the Bible and not upon secular or profane history. We consider the points in the order numbered hereinafter, as follows, to wit:

#### POINT I: TENURE OF KINGS

The time and duration of the reign of the various kings of Israel is one of the Biblical methods of establishing the various dates in our chronology. Saul, Israel's first king, began to reign in the year A. M. 3009. The total period of the tenure of the kings of Israel was, to wit, 513 years. The reign of the kings ended with the year A. M. 3522. No careful Bible students will dispute these facts. No other conclusion can be reached except by juggling the figures and ignoring the Bible statements.

In THE WATCH TOWER of May 15, 1896, page 112, is set forth a statement of chronology from Adam to 1914. These figures are given in *Anno Mundi* time. According to this calculation it is proven by the Scriptures there cited that Jehoiakim's reign began in the year A. M. 3500, which corresponds to the year 628 B. C. The beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, being definitely fixed, gives us a starting point from which to count the time and by which to determine the universal reign of Nebuchadnezzar and to reach a proper conclusion relative to the gentile times.

The first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. "The fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon." (Jeremiah 25:1; see also Jeremiah 46:2) Since Jehoiakim's reign began in 628 B. C., it follows that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign was the year 625 B. C. There was no attack made upon Jehoiakim by Nebuchadnezzar in the year of 625 B. C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. There could have been no attack as a king made by him earlier than that. It was in that fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign and the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, to wit, the year 625 B. C., that the prophet Jeremiah delivered the divine decree pointing out that it was God's determination to leave the land of Palestine desolate as a punishment upon Israel.

#### THE FIRST ATTACK

In the fourth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (and therefore the eighth year of the reign of Jehoiakim), Nebuchadnezzar made his first attack against Jerusalem; and in that year Jehoiakim became the servant or vassal to the king of Babylon. Three years later, to wit, in the year 617 B. C., the same being the eleventh year of the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiakim a prisoner and put him to death. The record reads: "Jehoiakim was twenty and five years

old when he began to reign [628 B. C.]; and he reigned eleven years [617 B. C.] in Jerusalem. In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became *his servant three years*: then he turned and rebelled against him [Nebuchadnezzar]." (2 Kings 23:36; 24:1) "Against him [Jehoiakim] came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon."—2 Chronicles 36:6.

The carrying away of Jehoiachin to Babylon was in the year 617 B. C. Jehoiakim's reign having begun in 628 B. C., and he having reigned eleven years, necessarily it ended in 617 B. C. At that time Nebuchadnezzar was in the eighth year of his reign. Thus the Scriptures prove beyond any question of a doubt that the captivity did not begin in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; nor did the desolation begin there. It is therefore seen that it is utterly impossible for the gentile times to have begun in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, to wit, 625 B. C. No one claims that the gentile times began in 617 B. C., the year Jehoiakim was taken and put to death, as indeed such a claim could not be successfully made in view of the evidence hereinafter set forth.

#### HISTORIC CORROBORATION

It is reasonable to suppose that the Jewish historian Josephus, being deeply interested in his own people, would be more reliable in fixing dates than would the historians of the gentile nations. We do not at all need the testimony of Josephus, but because it is corroborated by the Bible we cite it here for what it is worth. He plainly states that no attack was made upon Jerusalem at the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. We quote from *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book X, Chapter VI, pages 365-367:

"In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, one whose name was Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians; who at the same time went up with a great army to the city Carchemish, which was at Euphrates; upon a resolution that he had taken to fight with Necho king of Egypt, under whom all Syria then was. And when Necho understood the intention of the king of Babylon, and that this expedition was made against him, he did not despise his attempt; but made haste with a great band of men to Euphrates, to defend himself from Nebuchadnezzar. And when they had joined battle he was beaten, and lost many thousands of his soldiers. So the king of Babylon passed over the Euphrates, and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, *excepting Judea*. But when Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years, which was the eighth of Jehoiakim's government over the Hebrews, the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim; threatening upon his refusal to make war against him. He was affrighted at his threatening, and bought his peace with money; and brought the tribute he was ordered to bring for three years.

"But on the third year, upon hearing that the king of Babylon made an expedition against the Egyptians, he did not pay his tribute. . . .

"A little time afterward, the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim, who received him into the city; and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of Jeremiah, as supposing he should suffer nothing that was

terrible; because he neither shut the gates, nor fought against him. Yet when he was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants he had made; but he slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity; together with their king Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial, and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country, and of the city; he also took the principal persons in dignity for captives, three thousand in number, and led them away to Babylon. Among these was the prophet Ezeiel, who was then but young. And this was the end of king Jehoiakim, when he had lived thirty-six years, and reigned eleven. But he was succeeded in the kingdom by Jehoiachin, whose mother was Nehusta, a citizen of Jerusalem. He reigned three months and ten days."

Jehoiachin reigned only three months and ten days, and was succeeded by Zedekiah, whose reign began in the year 617 B. C. "Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the Lord, and made Zedekiah, his brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem. Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem." (2 Chronicles 36: 9-11) Thus it is clearly seen that the reign of Zedekiah, which began in 617 B. C., lasted eleven years and ended in 606 B. C. He was the last king of Israel.

#### POINT II: DECREE FOR PUNISHMENT

A decree means a judicial determination by one having authority, defining what must be done. It means a sentence pronounced that must be enforced. Necessarily decrees are always entered before they are enforced. Jehovah pronounced through Moses a divine decree or judgment that should be enforced against Israel as a punishment, and the decree is in these words: "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it."—Leviticus 26: 31, 32.

It must be conceded by all that the taking of certain of the Israelites as prisoners and carrying them away to Babylon would not constitute an enforcement of this decree. The putting to death of Jehoiakim in no wise fulfilled the decree. Besides after his death Zedekiah continued to be the king of Israel and reigned for eleven years. Surely during those eleven years the city was not in waste; nor were the sanctuaries in desolation. Surely during that period the Jews offered their sacrifices in Jerusalem. When, then, in all the history of Israel do we find any record of the enforcement of this divine decree? The Scriptures answer that it had its fulfillment in the latter part of the reign of Zedekiah. God had restated the decree of judgment against Israel through Jeremiah. Concerning Zedekiah, the last king, we read: "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before

Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar. . . . They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people. . . . Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees [Nebuchadnezzar], who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years."—2 Chronicles 36: 12, 13, 16-21.

#### NO CAPTIVITY BEFORE 617 B. C.

This occurred at the end of the reign of Zedekiah, to wit, in the year 606 B. C.

In corroboration of this we cite the further record dealing with the same subject matter, made by Ezekiel the prophet. Ezekiel counts the time mentioned in his prophecy from the date that he and other Jews were taken captive and carried away to Babylon. (Ezekiel 1: 1, 2; 8: 1; 20: 1) This captivity began in the year 617 B. C. In the seventh year of that captivity, in the fifth month and the tenth day of the month, to wit, about the first day of August, 610 B. C., which was the fifteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the divine decree for the punishment of Israel was restated in other phrase by the prophet Ezekiel.—Ezekiel 20: 1.

The same judicial determination of Jehovah as set forth in Leviticus 26: 31-33 was restated by Ezekiel in the following words: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because, I say, that ye are come to remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand. And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it [to] him."—Ezekiel 21: 24-27.

This restatement of the divine decree occurred four years before its enforcement. Brother Russell says that the enforcement of this divine decree marks the begin-

ning of the gentile times; and Brother Russell is right.  
—B-79, ¶¶ 2, 3.

#### GENTILE TIMES BEGAN 606 B. C.

God had promised that the sceptre should not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come. (Genesis 49:10) It will be observed that the decree of punishment did not include the removal of the sceptre. It merely states: "Remove the diadem, take off the crown". The crown is a symbol of imperial dominion or rulership; while the sceptre is a symbol of imperial authority or right. The enforcement of this divine decree, therefore, took away from Israel the dominion, which dominion should be enjoyed by the gentiles until the coming of him whose right it is, namely, Shiloh, the Messiah. The gentile times, therefore, could not possibly begin until the enforcement of this divine decree. (Ezekiel 21:24-27) And since it was pronounced by the prophet Ezekiel while Zedekiah was the king, it conclusively proves that the gentile times did not begin with the captivity of Jehoiakim or of Jehoiachin, but did begin with the overthrow of Zedekiah.

About August 1, 606[606] B.C., Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon broke down the city of Jerusalem and destroyed it, took Zedekiah and put out his eyes, and desolated the city and the land. (Jeremiah 39:2-9) Thus from another line of proof is definitely established that the divine decree was enforced in 606 B. C., ending the dominion of Israel and permitting the gentiles to establish a *universal* dominion. Here, at this time, it was that Jehovah, figuratively speaking, withdrew from the stage of action and permitted Satan, through his representative, Nebuchadnezzar, to establish a universal empire. Here it was that Satan became the 'god of the whole world'; and from that time forward his rule through earthly representatives is symbolized by a wild beast.

#### POINT III: DISCREPANCY EXPLAINED

Opponents of Brother Russell's conclusions on chronology attempt to show that the divine decree against Israel began to be enforced in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, and cite as authority Daniel 1:1, which reads: "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it". A careful examination of this text at once shows that there is a discrepancy. In the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, as we have heretofore seen, Nebuchadnezzar was *not yet king* of Babylon. He did not become king until a year later (Jeremiah 25:1); and the plain Scriptural statements heretofore cited show that Nebuchadnezzar's first attack against Jerusalem began in the eighth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. Hence it was impossible for him to attack in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign.

The proper and reasonable explanation of this Scrip-

ture (Daniel 1:1) is this: That the "third year" here means the third year of the vassalage of Jehoiakim to Nebuchadnezzar; or "the third year of Jehoiakim [as vassal king]". It is plainly stated in the Scriptures, as heretofore set forth, that in the eighth year of the reign of Jehoiakim as king, Nebuchadnezzar came against him and Jehoiakim became his servant and paid tribute to Nebuchadnezzar *three years* and then rebelled against him. (2 Kings 24:1) Therefore, it was exactly three years later the beginning of his vassalage, to wit, the year 617 B. C., that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and took Jehoiakim, and at the same time carried away the prophets Daniel, Ezekiel, and others, including Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, whose names were changed by the king to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, respectively. Daniel wrote his prophecy while he was in Babylon; and it is quite apparent that he counted time from the date of the beginning of the vassalage of Jehoiakim as king. Manifestly, then, the argument of Brother Russell's opponents that the gentile times began during the reign of Jehoiakim must fall.

#### POINT IV: NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

Again, opponents of the chronology as set forth by Brother Russell state that the beginning of the gentile times is marked by the accession of Nebuchadnezzar to the throne of Babylon, and in support of this contention cite Daniel 2:1. This argument must likewise fall.

Daniel 2:1 reads: "In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him". The dream itself is set forth in verses 31 to 35 of the same chapter. Nebuchadnezzar the king had brought before him magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to interpret his dream, and all of them failed. "Then Arioch [the captain of the king's guard] brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?"—Daniel 2:25, 26.

It is utterly impossible for this transaction to have occurred in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar for the following reasons, to wit: (1) because Daniel, in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, was *not in Babylon and could not then have been taken before the king*; (2) because he was taken to Babylon in the year 617 B. C., which was the eighth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; and (3) because Daniel was not permitted to appear before the king until after he had been in Babylon *three years*, according to his own testimony.

The facts heretofore set forth definitely establish the correctness of reasons (1) and (2). We proceed to the examination of (3):



In the eighth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon many of the Jews, among whom were Daniel and the three Hebrew children. The king gave an order unto Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of these Israelites "in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans". In other words, those so selected were to be educated and trained. "And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank; so nourishing them *three years, that at the end thereof* they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Now *at the end of the days* [to wit, three years] that the king had said that he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: *therefore stood they before the king.*"—Daniel 1: 3-6, 18, 19.

#### DATE OF DREAM WAS 614 B. C.

According to the king's decree, this transaction of Daniel's standing before the king could not have occurred until the end of the three years of instruction, which was, to wit, in the year 614 B. C. and in the eleventh year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Evidently it was about one year thereafter that Nebuchadnezzar had the dream in question.

Now to remove all doubt as to the correctness of this conclusion, we find that the *Variorum* rendering of this text (Daniel 2: 1) is: "And in the *twelfth* year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams," etc. The circumstantial evidence produced by Daniel himself proves that the *Variorum* rendering is correct.

The explanation of Daniel 2: 37, therefore, is that in the interpretation he told the king in substance that Jehovah had determined that he (Nebuchadnezzar) should be the head of the image observed. We are not left to guess about matters of this kind, because the apostle Paul plainly says that God "callesth those things which be not as though they were". (Romans 4: 17) Otherwise stated, Jehovah had determined that Nebuchadnezzar should occupy this position; but at that particular time Zedekiah was the king, had been king for three years, and reigned thereafter eight years before Nebuchadnezzar really assumed the position as head of the image.

#### POINT V: THE REIGN OF CYRUS

The argument hereinbefore made proves that the gentile times as a period is based upon the tenure of office of the Jewish kings. This evidence shows that it was the year 606 B. C. when the crown (power to ex-

ercise dominion) was taken from Israel, and a gentile king permitted to exercise that power. Now we introduce another line of proof by beginning at a later fixed date and counting back, measuring the time by unimpeachable Biblical testimony, which also shows the beginning of the gentile times to be 606 B. C. The latter line of proof is a complete corroboration of the former.

God had foretold through his prophet Isaiah (see chapters 44 and 45) that the kingdom of the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar would be overthrown and that then Israel would be returned to her own land. The Lord's prophet even named the victorious king, Cyrus. The date of the beginning of the reign of Cyrus therefore becomes important.

The reign of Cyrus is shown by the testimony of many secular or profane historians. This testimony is here cited for two reasons: (1) because there is scarcely a doubt about the correctness of the date as stated; and (2) because the date is corroborated by the Scriptural proof. Hence the secular history may be used as cumulative testimony under the rule. We give below a number of these authorities.

#### REIGN BEGAN 536 B. C., SAY HISTORIANS

Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, under the title "Captivities of the Jews", pages 99 and 100, says: "The Babylonian captivity was brought to a close by the decree of Cyrus, B. C. 536".

*Bible Comments* (Jamison, Faucett and Brown), Vol. 1, page 288, gives the date of the reign of Cyrus and the issuing of the decree as 536 B. C.

*Swinton's History*, page 40, gives 536 B. C. as the date of the edict of Cyrus for the return of the Jews.

*Historians' History of the World*, Vol. 2, page 27, gives 536 B. C. as the date of the decree of Cyrus for the return of the Jews.

*Universal Encyclopedia*, Vol. 6, page 445, gives 536 B. C. as the date of the reign of Cyrus.

Sanford's *Concise Cyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, page 471, gives the date of the beginning of Cyrus' reign as 536 B. C.

In the Scriptures we read: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up." (2 Chronicles 36: 22, 23) "Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. . . . Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchad-

nezza. had brought forth out of Jerusalem. . . . All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem." (Ezra 1: 5, 7, 11) "And when the seventh month was come and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. . . . They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia."—Ezra 3: 1, 7; see also Ezra 5: 12-14.

This Scriptural proof shows that the Jews' captivity to Babylon ended with the first year of the reign of Cyrus; and the secular historians above cited show that that year was 536 B. C. In the next succeeding point will be observed the Scriptural proof showing that the date 536 B. C. is correct, which proof also shows that the date 606 B. C. is the beginning of the gentile times.

#### POINT VI: DESOLATION NOT CAPTIVITY

Much confusion has resulted from using the words captivity, servitude, and desolation as synonymous terms. The Jews were in captivity more than once and for different periods of time; but there was only *one* period of desolation. It is true that the Jews were in captivity during the period of desolation, but such captivity was merely incidental to the desolation. Their first captivity to Nebuchadnezzar began in the year 617 B. C., and not until eleven years thereafter was the land made desolate, without an inhabitant. What God intended for us to understand must be determined by the language employed in his decree for the punishment of Israel. Therein he said: "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto *desolation*, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into *desolation*; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it." (Leviticus 26: 31, 32) Time and again the Lord restated the decree through the mouth of Jeremiah: "I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah *desolate*, without an inhabitant". (Jeremiah 9: 11; see also Jeremiah 33: 10; 34: 22) As heretofore seen, this divine decree was enforced with the overthrow of Zedekiah in the year 606 B. C.

The period of this desolation of the land is fixed by the Scriptures as seventy years. The purpose of the enforcement of the divine decree as set forth in 2 Chronicles 36: 18-20 was "to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she *lay desolate* she kept sabbath, to fulfill *threescore and ten years*". (Verse 21) The prophet Jeremiah had said: "This whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years".—Jeremiah 25: 11.

#### DESOLATE FOR SEVENTY YEARS

The proof heretofore adduced shows that the reign of Cyrus began in the year 536 B. C.; and that the first year of his reign marked the end of the desolation of the land, in which year he issued a decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The Scriptures cited show that this period of desolation was to be seventy years in duration. Counting back, then, seventy years from 536 B. C. brings us to 606 B. C., completely corroborating the other line of proof showing that 606 B. C. is the date when the crown was removed from Israel, when the desolation began, and when the gentile times began.

Incidentally, here we remark that much has been said about the *nineteen years* of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar before the overthrow of Zedekiah; and an attempt is made to show that this indicates that there is a parallel of nineteen years to be fulfilled with reference to the close of the gentile times and the complete fall of gentile governments. There is absolutely no justification for any such conclusion. It is not warranted by reason nor by Scriptures. The nineteen years have nothing whatsoever to do with the gentile times, their beginning, end, or the overthrow of governments. It has merely been injected to confuse the minds of some. We might as well say that because a cat has "nine lives" it would take nine years to kill all the cats, as to say that, because Nebuchadnezzar reigned nineteen years before he overthrew Zedekiah, therefore the overthrow of gentile dominion would be nineteen years after 1914. The argument is unreasonable, unscriptural, and nonsensical.

#### POINT VII: THE END—OUSTER PROCEEDINGS BEGUN

Upon all the evidence there cannot be the slightest doubt about the gentile times. The lease of universal dominion to the gentiles could not begin as long as there was a vestige of God's typical kingdom. It matters not when the heathen king Nebuchadnezzar began his reign. The nineteen years of his reign so much spoken of are wholly immaterial, foreign to the issue. The possession and exercise of imperial dominion by Israel, symbolized by the crown, ceased when that crown was removed, to wit, when the last ruler of Israel was dethroned. That occurred in 606 B. C. There the dominion to the whole world was left in the hands of the gentiles, which date is by every line of proof fixed as 606 B. C. There the period of gentile dominion began. Being seven symbolic times in duration, to wit, 2520 years, it ended in 1914 A. D.

But, say those who oppose Brother Russell's conclusions, what has happened to show that the gentile times have ended? Are not the gentile governments still exercising ruling power? Are not things going on they were from the beginning?

We answer, Everything has happened that the Lord foretold would happen. With the close of the (Jewish) year 1914, he whose right it is took unto himself his great power and began his reign; the nations were an-

gry, and the day of God's wrath began.—Ezekiel 21: 27; Revelation 11: 17, 18.

#### GENTILE TIMES ENDED IN 1914

On the first day of October, 1914, Brother Russell walked into the dining-room at Bethel and, clapping his hands, announced in stentorian tones: "The gentile times have ended! The kings of earth have had their day!" Brother Russell was right then. He was right when he wrote Volume II concerning the gentile times. If the contention of his opponents concerning chronology is right, then everything that transpired in 1914 and since must be disregarded as evidence of Messiah's kingdom. It is admitted by them that the tenure of office of Israel's kings must be changed in order to agree with some historians who were agents of Satan. Such a change would put out of joint all our chronology, and destroy the value of the dates 1874, 1878, 1881, 1910, 1914, and 1918. Such would be equivalent to saying, "Where is the proof of his presence?" "My Lord delayeth his coming."—2 Peter 3: 4; Matthew 24: 48.

Is any Christian so blind that he cannot see what happened in 1914 and thereafter, evidencing the end of the gentile times? By way of illustration: A tenant holds a piece of property under a lease, which lease expires January 1, 1914. The tenant refuses to vacate. The landlord, in order to legally obtain possession, must institute ouster proceedings. God granted to the gentiles a lease of dominion for a term of 2520 years, which term or lease ended about August, 1914. Then came forward the Landlord, the rightful Ruler (Ezekiel 21: 27), and began ouster proceedings. It is not to be expected that he would suddenly wipe everything out of existence, for that is not the way the Lord does things; but that he would overrule the contending elements, causing these to destroy the present order; and that while this is going on he would have his faithful followers give a tremendous witness in the world, so that the teachable

people might recognize the hideousness of Satan's empire and the blessedness offered by the Messianic empire, to the end that many of these might be brought through the trouble and be ready for the restoration blessings that are to follow.

To this end, exactly on time, the ouster proceedings began in the World War, followed quickly by famine, pestilence, and revolution, the rehabilitation of Palestine by the Jews, persecution of Christians in various parts of the earth, offenses amongst those who claim to be Jesus' followers, while the love of many waxed cold. All of these things Jesus stated would constitute a trying time, a trial of faith and patience, which would be so severe that only 'he that endureth to the end should be saved'. (Matthew 24: 7-13) While these ouster proceedings are in progress, he commands his followers to tell the people that Satan's empire has ended; that the gentile times have ended; that the world has ended, and here is the proof of it; that the kingdom of heaven is at hand; that the time of restoration is here; that millions now living will never die; and that "this gospel [good news] of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come".

Are those who oppose the conclusions of Brother Russell concerning chronology obeying this command of giving the witness? Do we find those who are in harmony with his conclusions concerning the gentile times obeying this injunction and preaching the evidences of the kingdom and that millions now living will never die? Surely everything has happened exactly as the Lord said it would happen concerning the end of the gentile times.

What will transpire in 1925? Wait upon the Lord and see. Be faithful to present privileges. Every Christian's faith is on trial. "According to your faith be it unto you."

## TEXAS CONVENTION

A FOUR-DAY convention of the Bible Students was held at Dallas, Texas, March 9 to 12, Pilgrim Brother Edward Stark serving as chairman. The other speakers were Brothers V. C. Rice, S. H. Toujian, G. R. Pollock, O. Magnuson, Scott Anderson, A. H. Macmillan, and Brother Rutherford. The convention was attended by friends from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Missouri, the largest number of friends attending on any one day being about five hundred. It was indeed good to be there, and on every face was observed the happy Christian smile. Frequently the remark was made: "This is the best convention I have ever attended".

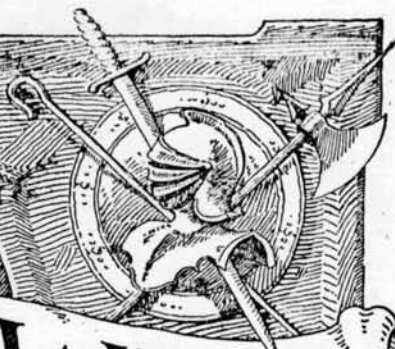
These conventions serve as a great uplift and strength to the friends, particularly the isolated ones. They have very little fellowship with others, and coming to a con-

vention of several days is to them like transformation into an entirely different atmosphere. The testimony meetings gave strong evidence of this, the friends showing by their testimonies that they are not only rejoicing in the opportunities of service, but are growing in knowledge of the Lord's plan and the fruits and graces of the spirit.

On Sunday morning a question meeting was conducted by Brother Rutherford and we append hereto a few of the questions and answers:

**Question:** Is Jehu a type of the great company?

**Answer:** No. The Scriptures clearly indicate that Jehu did not represent a spiritual class. Some time ago the Society requested the Pilgrim brethren not to discuss in their discourses Jehu in antitype, because it has been deemed a wise course to take.



# WATCH TOWER

And Herald of Christ's Presence

ROCK OF AGES  
Other foundation can  
no man lay  
A RANSOM FOR ALL

"Watchman, What of the Night?  
The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah

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"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot  
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will  
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them  
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

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Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24: 33; Mark 13: 29; Luke 21: 25-27.

# The WATCH TOWER

## AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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No. 10

### CHRONOLOGY

*"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."—1 Peter 3: 15.*

**WE** HAVE no doubt whatever in regard to the chronology relating to the dates of 1874, 1914, 1918, and 1925. Some claim to have found new light in connection with the period of "seventy years of desolation" and Israel's captivity in Babylon, and are zealously seeking to make others believe that Brother Russell was in error.

The apostle James assures us that "if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him". We believe that promise and daily petition for heavenly wisdom and grace to be guided aright. We also believe that the prayers of the saints ascend daily to the throne of heavenly grace for divine guidance as to what shall appear in *THE WATCH TOWER*, and we are very appreciative of that fact.

An accurate understanding of chronology apparently is not a necessity to salvation. The subject has been largely concealed during the dark ages, and doubtless many saints have made their calling and election sure without the aid of the chronological features hidden in the Bible. But they had a knowledge sufficient for their time. Even now some find it very difficult to grasp chronology fully, and therefore depend upon the explanations of others. However, a fuller understanding of the times and seasons affords a great joy to the toiling saints of God, and is a stimulus to zeal.

Toward the close of the gospel age, in harmony with the prophecy of Daniel, God began to open the floodgates of knowledge along many lines, in preparation for the incoming kingdom. As people began to awake to the light, they commenced to investigate and explore in every direction. Old libraries were ransacked, long-buried cities were excavated, in search of more light upon the hidden past.

#### SOUGHT TO DISCREDIT BIBLE

The worldly-wise have always disliked the Bible, because it discounted their wisdom and held it up to scorn. They would rejoice greatly if they could prove it untrue. With eagerness, therefore, have they searched long and diligently to that end. Any new discovery is

heralded far and wide with a great show of wisdom. Some of the discovered records give evidence of great age, and are accordingly given much weight as authority. Conclusions are drawn by comparing various writings from different countries, and an endeavor made to piece together broken fragments, found here and there. But even after their best endeavors, they are often forced to admit that their conclusions cannot be proved. Contradictions are often found in some, and connections cannot be made in others.

Some of their best "authorities" are found at times to be unreliable; as, for instance, Josephus and Ptolemy. These men lived during the first two centuries after Christ. They had difficulty in compiling their records; for complete data were not accessible to them. No doubt they did the best they could under their limited circumstances. They are accepted as among the best that secular history can produce. From these and from others, certain dates have been generally accepted by historical writers; but to be generally accepted does not necessarily imply absolute accuracy. However, to impress the weight of their wisdom upon their readers, these conclusions are often stated in positive language, and the student is inclined to accept them at their face statement without further investigation.

But why rely upon uncertainties when the Lord has provided in his Word a complete reliable record from Adam to the return of the Jews from Babylon, and from that time on secular records are reliable? Though to the casual reader there are apparent breaks, God has so overruled that every such break is fully bridged elsewhere. We need not trace all the tangled and broken threads of secular chronology when we have a straight one to follow. The adversary has always endeavored to deceive people. No doubt he has had much to do towards causing the confusion in the historical records of ancient history, where he could not destroy them altogether.

But in spite of Satan's attempts thus to break connections, God has continued to keep an unbroken line that his people may not walk in darkness. (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-5) However God has purposely hidden these from the worldly-wise, who prefer to walk in the light of their own wisdom.—Daniel 12: 10.



## TRUE BIBLE CHRONOLOGY

For the benefit of some who may not be so familiar with these divine records and for some of the more recent readers of THE WATCH TOWER, and also that all may refresh themselves with these beautiful truths, we herewith epitomize the line of chronology. For details as to the first six periods here given we refer the reader to pages 42 to 50 of Volume II, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES:

	Years
From creation of Adam to the end of the flood.....	1656
From the flood to the covenant with Abraham.....	427
From the covenant with Abraham to the Exodus.....	430
From the Exodus to the division of the land.....	48
Period of the Judges of Israel.....	450
Saul to Zedekiah (21 kings).....	513
Creation of Adam to dethronement of Zedekiah.....	3522

The break in the Old Testament records as to the length of the time the Judges ruled, and the length of the reign of King Saul are carefully covered in the New Testament. Evidently this is of God's overruling for the edification of his people.

It is in the endeavor to connect secular records with the Bible record at the time of the "seventy years of desolation" that some claim to have found the new light. Practically all agree that B. C. 536 was "the first year of Cyrus" mentioned in Ezra 1:1, at which time such Jews as desired were permitted to return to Jerusalem. From thence we have connected records to the present.

There can be no exception taken to the line showing that the last year of Zedekiah was A. M. 3522, as shown above. There is no contention about the first year of Cyrus being B. C. 536. It does make considerable difference where these two records are connected as to what year A. M. we are now in.

## THE PERIOD OF CAPTIVITY

In Jeremiah 29:10 and 25:11, 12 a period of captivity of 70 years is mentioned. When did this period begin? The Bible locates the time definitely as 3522 A. M. (606 B. C.), the 19th year of King Nebuchadnezzar. Secular historians vary considerably. The question hinges upon the date of the commencement of the 70 years period, some calling it the "70 years of captivity" and others the "70 years of desolation". Does the captivity synchronize with the desolation?

Daniel 9:25 states that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince would be 69 weeks of symbolic time, 483 years actual time. Jesus became Messiah the Prince at his baptism. A. D. 29, as shown fully in Volume II, page 60. 483 years less the 29 A. D. would leave 454 B. C. as the date when Nehemiah received his commission from King Artaxerxes to rebuild the city and the walls. 454 B. C. was 82 years after 536 B. C., and the Jews were still under the dominion of Babylon. Comparing Nehemiah 5:14 and 13:6 we find the Jews still under the yoke of Babylon, bringing the date down 12 years later, or to 442 B. C. This would make a

period of 94 years after the return of some in 536 B. C. If we add the 70 years to that we have a total of at least 164 years, 606 to 442 B. C. under the king of Babylon.

We see in a moment, then, that the desolation and captivity therefore could not synchronize. The Bible testimony is clear that the Jews first became tributary to Babylon three years before the death of Jehoiakim (2 Kings 24:1); but Jerusalem was not captured, nor did Nebuchadnezzar appear before the city, at that time. At the end of the three years Jehoiakim rebelled, Nebuchadnezzar took the city, Jehoiakim died; and Nebuchadnezzar left Jehoiachin, a son of Jehoiakim, on the throne. He ruled only three months and was carried captive to Babylon, together with Daniel and his three companions and Ezekiel. Zedekiah, an uncle of Jehoiachin, was left upon the throne. The city was left, the Temple was not destroyed, nor was the government overthrown.

## SEVENTY YEARS OF DESOLATION

We now desire to review some positive evidence that the 70 years of desolation did not begin to count from this capture of Jerusalem. Not until the overthrow of Zedekiah, 11 years still later, did it count. In Leviticus 25 the law of the jubilee is given. Every fiftieth year was to be a jubilee. Jewish reckoning was thus divided into semi-centuries, an easy manner of computing time. Every fifty-first year would be the first year of another jubilee cycle of 50 years. Had the Jews been obedient to their law, there could have been no doubt as to the chronological record; for they would never have gone into captivity, and would have preserved their records without interference. Did their disobedience alter God's outlined time arrangements for the bringing in of the antitype? No intimation of such a change is found, but on the contrary the evidence is that he held to his original plan.

Leviticus 26:31 to 35 reads as follows:

31 "And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odors.

32 "And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.

33 "And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

34 "Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land, even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

35 "As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest: because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it."

This is a prophetic statement, but addressed to the nation. "It did not rest . . . when ye dwelt [yashab] upon it" shows clearly that none of the time while they were on the land would be counted. The word here rendered 'dwelt' is the same Hebrew word (yashab) that is rendered 'inhabitant' in Jeremiah 44:22. Yashab is rendered 'dwell' 434 times, 'remain' 23 times, 'sit' 25 times, 'inhabitant' 31 times, and by various other rendering in the King James version. The nation

was not to be an inhabitant; for it was to the nation that the statement was made. God foreknew what course it would take, and so he foretold how he would deal with it. The people would be sent into the land of their enemies; their *land*, their cities and their sanctuaries would all be laid waste and become desolate. The length of the time of desolation is not here stated, except that it would be long enough for the land to "enjoy her sabbaths". There is no Scripture to prove that the land was denuded of every individual.

#### NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S THREE MOVES AGAINST JEWS

Nebuchadnezzar went against Jerusalem three times, in person or by his orders: first, in the eighth year of Jehoiakim, which was the fifth year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:1); second, during the three months reign of Jehoiachin, who followed Jehoiakim, three years later, which was the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:12). Apparently Jehoiachin put up no defence, but surrendered without a fight. At this time (617 B. C.) Daniel and his companions and Ezekiel were carried captive to Babylon. It is from this date that Ezekiel dates his prophecies, Ezekiel 8:1; 40:1.

Although Nebuchadnezzar took many captives and much treasure on the second invasion, he did not remove the nation. He left a king upon the throne, many people in the cities, and the Temple and its sanctuaries. The government was still recognized, and therefore the prophecy of Leviticus 26:31-35 could not yet be applied. It was not yet true "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. . . . and I will bring the land into desolation".

The third time was 11 years later. (606 B. C.) The record in 2 Chronicles 36:14-21 is very explicit, making mention of the Temple, the cities and the land.

18 "And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.

19 "And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

20 "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia,

21 "To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she [the land] lay desolate she kept her sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years."

Here is the complete statement in a nutshell—the explanation of the desolation of the sanctuaries, the waste of the cities, and the desolation of the land, "without an inhabitant" nation. No nation was permitted to hold a dwelling on the land while the Jews were in Babylon. Here commenced the fulfilling of the prophecies of Leviticus 26:31-35; Jeremiah 25:8-11; 29:10; 44:22; and Daniel 9:2. This shows conclusively that the land was to be desolate, to rest for 70 years; and that the desolation began at the downfall of Zedekiah, 606 B. C. and closed at the first year of

Cyrus, 536 B. C. Thus 3592 A. M. and B. C. 536 are joined clearly.

Note again the further statements of the Scriptures. Those who returned did not all go to Jerusalem, but "unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his own city". They did not have to reconquer the land; their cities were still waiting their return. This shows clearly that the previous order was restored to considerable extent, the rehabilitation of the country and the cities, and the reestablishment of the sanctuary at Jerusalem. (Ezra 2:1, 70; 3:1-6) Thus the beginning and the end of the period known as the "70 years desolation" are so clearly marked we do not see how there can be any question whatsoever.

#### UNRELIABLE SECULAR CHRONOLOGY

How can this be harmonized with secular chronology, which states that Nebuchadnezzar began to reign in 606 B. C., reigned 43 years, and died in 561 B. C.? We are not called upon to harmonize the Bible with secular chronology any more than we are expected to harmonize the gospel of the Bible with secular creeds. It is for the students of secular chronology to harmonize their records with the Bible. "All Scripture given by inspiration of God [and the Scriptures quoted above must have been given by inspiration of God] is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works". The Bible is clear and connected, while the worldly records are acknowledged to be faulty, disconnected, unreliable, and fragmentary. Daniel 12:10 foretells that the worldly-wise will not accept God's Word, and therefore shall not understand. They will lean unto their own wisdom and thus be misled, and on "this account God will send to them an energy of delusion, to their believing the falsehood".—2 Thessalonians 2:11.

It makes no difference to the student of the Bible whether Evil Merodach and Belshazzar were the only two kings to follow Nebuchadnezzar until Cyrus; or whether, as some claim, there were several others also, nor how long each one is said to have individually reigned. The period is fully covered by the records above cited. Besides, the testimony of the larger cycles fully corroborate them, thus making a cable and not a single thread. Those who are humble enough to rely upon the Word of God will be wise enough to understand, and these are all that are desired by the Lord at the present time. In the near future, when all those kings and rulers and historians shall have returned, it will be an easy matter to straighten out all the snarls. There no adversary will be permitted to interfere.

Recapitulating then, the Bible record is conclusive that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar synchronizes with the fourth year of king Jehoiakim, which was the year 3503 A. M. or 625 B. C. The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar connects with the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and was 3522 A. M. or 606 B. C. Seventy years later,

when the Jews returned to their land, connects with the first year of Cyrus, and would be 3592 A. M., or 536 B. C. Thus 1922 is 6050 A. M., as shown on THE WATCH TOWER—3592 plus 536 plus 1922.

#### STAMPED WITH GOD'S APPROVAL

It was on this line of reckoning that the dates 1874, 1914, and 1918 were located; and the Lord has placed the stamp of his seal upon 1914 and 1918 beyond any possibility of erasure. What further evidence do we need?

Using this same measuring line, beginning with the entry of the children of Israel into Canaan, and counting the full 70 cycles of 50 years each, as clearly indicated by Jehovah's sending of the Jews into Babylon for the full 70 years, it is an easy matter to locate 1925, probably the fall, for the beginning of the antitypical jubilee. There can be no more question about 1925 than there was about 1914. The fact that all the things that some looked for in 1914 did not materialize does not alter the chronology one whit. Noting the date marked so prominently, it is very easy for the finite mind to conclude that all the work to be done must center about it, and thus many are inclined to anticipate more than has been really foretold. Thus it was in 1844, in 1874, in 1878 as well as in 1914 and 1918. Looking back we can now easily see that those dates were clearly indicated in Scripture and doubtless intended by the Lord to encourage his people, as they did, as well as to be a means of testing and sifting when all that some expected did not come to pass. That all that some expect to see in 1925 may not transpire that year will not alter the date one whit more than in the other cases.

The preparations for the kingdom have been coming on apace, and the announcement of it is being heralded

with a world-wide witness. The results following the dates of 1918 and 1921 indicate more and more distinctly that they were turning-points or mile-stones on the chronological highway, and clearly foreknown and foretold by the Designer of the Divine Plan of the Ages. The trumpet of liberty for the people has been sounding with ever-increasing volume since 1918, and the world is staggering like a drunken man. Never before has it been so manifest that "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known". (Luke 12:2) All the signs indicate that the world is in the rapids of the coming cataclysm, unable to rescue itself, and yet unwilling to accept divine assistance.—Jeremiah 51:8, 9.

It seems that God has permitted the adversary to disconnect every other line of chronology prior to the time of Cyrus. No doubt Satan thought he had succeeded completely until God overruled that St. Paul should give just the needed information in his writings. To some this is a test of faith. To the consecrated child of God it is another manifestation of God's careful consideration for the needs of his children, of his provision for their protection in matters of instruction and edification. If others prefer worldly wisdom, that is their privilege. God has promised that his instruction will perfect the "man of God". We need to put on the "whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all [this] to stand [having assured ourselves of God's full provision for our protection, we need not to worry, but to rely upon him fully and confidently]". A prominent part of this armor is the shield of faith, in his Word, wherewith we are able to quench (ward off) all these darts of unbelief, which are liable to wound even unto death.

## WITNESSES FOR THE TRUTH

*"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness."—Revelation 3:14.*

IT HAS been a rule for some time observed by the Bible Students to have a text for the year and a text for the week for special consideration and meditation. The consideration of these texts is intended to enable the followers of Christ to keep in mind the character of the perfect Pattern and to be conformed thereto. That this is the proper course for the Christian is abundantly testified to by the Scriptures. The apostle Paul writing to the church said: "We all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord". (2 Corinthians 3:18) A mirror is used to reflect the image of one who looks into it. In this instance the Bible is symbolized by a mirror, which Bible reflects the character of Jehovah and of the Lord Jesus. The spirit-begotten anointed ones have their faces opened or unveiled. This is the result of the illumination that comes to those who are anointed of the holy spirit. To such God has re-

vealed the deep things of his Word.—1 Corinthians 2:9, 10.

#### OUR MINDS TRANSFORMED

The mind of the new creature is the battle-ground. The mind is that which is to be transformed. (Romans 12:2) The figure, then, here given by the Apostle and stated in other phrase is to this effect: As new creatures in Christ Jesus our vision is opened. We desire to have our minds transformed. To do this we are to look into God's Word as though we were looking into a mirror; and looking into it we see the reflection of Jehovah's character and the character of his beloved Son; and thus beholding, the transformation from one degree of glory to a greater degree takes place, even by the spirit of the Lord.

Last year our week-texts used for the prayer meetings related to Jehovah, the Father. This year our week-texts relate to the Son. These various texts enable us to view the Lord from different standpoints. How, then,



**"Watchman, What of the Night?  
The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah**

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"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them that oppose me"—Habakkuk 2:1.

COWTETS

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24:38; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:26-32.



# The WATCH TOWER

## AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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### SEVENTY YEARS' DESOLATION (PART 1)

*"Them that had escaped from the sword carried he [Nebuchadnezzar] away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath to fulfill threescore and ten years."—2 Chronicles 36: 20, 21.*

FROM time to time Bible students who quite evidently are either unfamiliar with all the teachings of present truth or unappreciative of the thoroughgoing convincingness of what has been brought out through the Society, "discover" some "error" in proved present truth. Without waiting to communicate with the Society, which could help them, and without making a thorough search, and without properly ascertaining the weight of evidence published and the insubstantiality of their own "findings" (1 Timothy 3: 6; 2 Timothy 4: 4), they rush to communicate their "new" ideas to others. A few others, no better grounded in the truth than these mistaken leaders, follow their injudicious course, and are led into a state of uncertainty and doubt; and some of them, especially of the leaders, forsake the way of present truth, abandon the opportunities and privileges of co-working with God (2 Corinthians 6: 1) and of suffering with Christ (Philippians 1: 29), separate themselves from those in present truth, lightly leave their crowns to others (Revelation 3: 11), and make shipwreck of their glorious hopes. (1 Timothy 1: 19) The uniform experience in all such abandonments of the faith and in the divisions so inaugurated is that they start out with a loud noise of professions of loyalty to abstract truth and soon diminish in numbers and zeal until either wholly scattered or settled down into a state of inactivity—of "waiting upon the Lord", as they are pleased to term their slothfulness in service.

On account of their smallness of numbers, each of these groups regards itself the "little flock". There are a dozen such schismatic "little flocks", characterized by an increasing littleness and by an absence of the predicted glorious activity in the warfare of the Lamb with the beast. (Isaiah 61: 2; Revelation 17: 14) The result is a slight temporary diminution of the amount of work done in his name, with a more than compensating increase of zeal among those holding the faith.

These occurrences are the periodic siftings and shakings which the Lord has foreknown and which are evidently necessary to cleanse and purify the church; for "there be divisions among you. . . . There must also be

heresies among you, that they which are [divinely] approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Corinthians 11: 18, 19) If any finally decide that they do not desire to remain with us in our service of the Lord, they must follow their own consciences; but we may rest in the Lord, assured that, whoever they may be that leave us, "they went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us". (1 John 2: 19) These are the promised shakings which will shake everything except that which cannot be shaken. (Hebrews 12: 27) However, let the church fear not the siftings and shakings; for these are part of the divinely-promised work of the complete cleansing of the church as it approaches the end of the way. (Matthew 13: 41; Revelation 1: 15) Rather let the church of God rejoice at these evidences of the Father's attention to its welfare.—John 15: 2.

#### WHEN DID THE SEVENTY YEARS BEGIN?

This time it is the matter of the date of the beginning of the seventy years' desolation of Judea and of whether it was all *desolation* or all *captivity*. This is testing the faith of some. This has been fully and adequately covered by Pastor Russell in "The Time Is at Hand", pages 51, 52, and in great detail in Dr. John and Morton Edgar's "Great Pyramid Passages", Volume 2, pages 29-37, to both of which works we refer our readers. But for the benefit of those not having all the information at hand we will review the salient points, to bring them again clearly to remembrance.—2 Peter 3: 1.

#### SEVENTY YEARS' DESOLATION, NOT CAPTIVITY

Concerning the desolation Pastor Russell says: "Usher dates the seventy years' desolation eighteen years earlier than shown above. . . . He evidently makes the not uncommon mistake of regarding those seventy years as a period of *captivity*, whereas the Lord expressly declares them to be seventy years of *desolation* of the land, that the land should lie 'desolate, without an inhabitant.'"

The seventy years were years of desolation, not cap-



tivity. This is shown in the Scriptural historical record, which cannot be otherwise understood, and according to which the seventy years did not begin until *after* the overthrow of the last king, Zedekiah, in 606 B. C.: "Them that had escaped from the sword carried he [Nebuchadnezzar, in 606 B. C.] away to Babylon, where they were servants [for seventy years] to him and to his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia [under Cyrus, 536 B. C.] to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths for as long as she lay *desolate* she kept sabbath, to fulfill *threescore and ten years*". (2 Chronicles 36:20, 21) This passage speaks of simultaneous desolation, servitude and captivity.

Other passages showing that desolation means "without an inhabitant" are as follows:

"To make thy land *desolate*, and thy cities shall be laid waste *without an inhabitant*."—Jeremiah 4:7.

"I will make the cities of Judah *desolate, without an inhabitant*."—Jeremiah 9:11.

"In this place, which ye say shall be *desolate, without man and without beast*, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem."—Jeremiah 33:10.

"I will make the cities of Judah a *desolation without an inhabitant*."—Jeremiah 34:22.

Others that might be quoted are Jeremiah 2:15; 44:22; and 51:37, all showing that the predicted seventy years' desolation meant a period of that length in which the land should be "without an inhabitant". This state was never reached, or even begun, until after the overthrow of Zedekiah, the removal of the people to Babylon, and the flight of the small remnant into Egypt for fear of the Chaldeans (Jeremiah 43:1-7), leaving the land, as divinely predicted, "desolate, without an inhabitant," for "threescore and ten years".

#### HISTORICAL CONFIRMATION

The Jewish historian Josephus, writing after the occurrence and expressing the knowledge of all Jews—who certainly were conversant with the facts—says that the seventy years were years of *desolation after* the fall of the city under Zedekiah: "He [Nebuchadnezzar] reduced them all, and set our temple which was at Jerusalem on fire [2 Chronicles 36:19-21], nay, removed our people entirely out of their own country, and transferred them to Babylon; when it so happened that our city was *desolate* during the interval of *seventy years*, until the days of Cyrus king of Persia".—Apion 1:19.

In another place Josephus reiterates his statement as to the seventy years of desolation: "But the king of Babylon, who brought out the two tribes [Judah and Benjamin], placed no other nation in their country, by which means all Judea and Jerusalem, and the temple, continued to be a *desert for seventy years*".—Ant. X, 9:7.

It is quite obvious that a Jewish historian, even

though not inspired, would not record the seventy years as a "desolate" or "desert" state which began *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, had this not been the actual condition, as generally known by his people. It may have been possible for Josephus to be uncertain in some details of obscure dates, but it is beyond the bounds of possibility for him to have been mistaken about such an important, outstanding fact of his people's history. The Jews of that time were far more likely to know the simple fact, whether those were seventy years of desolation or of captivity, than is some over-zealous but less informed or misinformed scholar, doctor of divinity, or student of the present day. For our part, we prefer to take our stand with the divinely directed mediator, Moses, the inspired prophet Jeremiah, and the ancient historian of the Jewish nation, all of whom agree that these "seventy years" were years of *desolation*, rather than of captivity—the captivity beginning at an earlier date and being a different thing.

#### DETAILS OF PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT

In the inspired prophecy of Moses one of the important sabbath rests was the fiftieth year: "A jubilee [sounding of silver trumpets] shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you; ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field."—Leviticus 25:11.

The Jews, through unbelief in God's promised abundance, failed to give the land its sabbath rest on even one of the nineteen jubilees which transpired between their entrance into Palestine (1575 B. C.) and the overthrow of Zedekiah (606 B. C.). God foreknew this unbelief, and foretold, through the prophet Moses, that if they failed to keep the law of the jubilee the land was destined to have its divinely-appointed jubilee rest through a coming desolation, during which he would scatter them among the nations, a year of desolation without an inhabitant for each neglected jubilee sabbath year: "And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it."—Leviticus 26:33-35.

The accurate Bible student will not overlook that the prophesied sabbath rest for the land combined a desolation of the land with absence of the Jews from that land. This combined requirement never began until after the overthrow of Zedekiah in 606 B. C. It would be a denial of the prophecy of Leviticus to assert that the mere captivity of some of the Jews, their mere servitude as a tributary nation, met the divinely-foretold "desolation without an inhabitant". The prime

requirement was *desolation*, not captivity or servitude—*desolation combined with captivity and servitude* was the divine penalty. To insist that this seventy year prophecy means servitude without *desolation* of the land is to ignore the Word of God given through Moses, and no such idea can be true nor can those adhering to it have God's blessing on their course. As will be shown, this notion rests upon pagan and demonistic support and leads into other errors, a morass of doubts, and ultimately into higher criticism and infidelity.

#### PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT

As the appointed time for the desolation and sabbatic rest of the land approached, the Lord, in harmony with his policy of informing of evils to come, revealed through Jeremiah, without stating when, that the period of contemporaneous desolation, servitude, and captivity was to be seventy years, thus also indicating the total length of the jubilee system as  $50 \times 70$ , or 3,500 years: "And this whole land shall be a *desolation*, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual [lasting] desolations"—as Mesopotamia still is.—Jeremiah 25: 11, 12.

"After seventy years be accomplished [by the entire nation] at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."—Jeremiah 29: 10.

The historic record of fulfillment of seventy years desolation is plainly stated in the Bible, as well as in Jewish history: "As long as she [the land of Palestine] lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill *threescore and ten years*".—2 Chronicles 36: 21.

It would be a quibble to assert that this does not mean seventy years of sabbath rest in desolation.

The date for the beginning of the seventy years' desolation of Jeremiah's prophecy was not understood clearly at the time by either the Prophet or the people. It was not until the first year of Darius the Mede (538 B. C.) that Daniel began first to understand from a study of the Books of Jeremiah and Leviticus that the seventy years of desolation were then up: "In the first year of his [Darius', 538 B. C.] reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the *desolations* of Jerusalem". (Daniel 9: 2) As usual, the prophecy was not understood until its fulfillment.

Daniel, as a wise and successful governor, came at once into high favor with Darius the Mede (Cyaxares II—538 B. C.) and then with Cyrus (536 B. C.), and doubtless did something toward influencing the Persian monarch's mind favorably toward the Jews, in bringing to an end the seventy years' empty desolateness of their

land. Cyrus permitted part of the Jews to return that year. Part of them remained captive and did not return till the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7—467 B. C.) and others till the twentieth year of the same king. (Nehemiah 2—454 B. C.) So long were some still in captivity that, according to later history, they wondered if the "seventy years" were not figurative, and many never returned from captivity. If the captivity of some of the Jews and not the *desolation* of Jerusalem and of Judea constituted the chief feature in the seventy-years prophecy, then the question might be properly asked, Has the period yet ended?—for some *never* returned to their own land. Such considerations show how the neglect or perversion of some part of the Biblical statements both makes the Word of God of none effect and leads off into endless doubts and confusing questions. This is characteristic of the deceptive methods of demons.

#### NO CAPTIVITY UNDER JEHOIAKIM

Bishop Usher, and others following his lead, have fathered an unscriptural idea that there was a captivity of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth (or third) year of Jehoiakim (625 B. C.) 18 (or 19) years before the seventy years' desolation began at the fall of Zedekiah (606 B. C.). They imagine that the seventy years' desolation were seventy years' captivity, dating from the fourth (or third) year of Jehoiakim, and consisting of 18 (or 19) years' captivity alone plus 52 (or 51) years' captivity and desolation combined. The fact is, as seen from the above mentioned Scriptures, that there were seventy years of captivity *coincident* with seventy years' desolation.

The effect of this misconception upon the chronology of the Bible would be to show that the desolation was nineteen years shorter than it really was, or that we count the nineteen year period twice, and thus make the period of time prior to the desolation nineteen years too long.

#### NO CAPTIVITY NOR VASSALAGE IN 625 B. C.

A doctrine should never be based on a passage of doubtful meaning, reading, or authenticity. This error is based upon the reading of a passage which is inharmonious (1) with the rest of the Scripture record of the attacks by Nebuchadnezzar upon Judea and Jerusalem, and (2) with other Scriptures.

A little scrutiny of Daniel 1: 1, 2 shows that there is something the matter with it. The passage in our Common Version reads: "In the *third* year [626 B. C.] of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god."

These events, as we shall see, actually took place in 617 B. C.—Jehoiakim's eleventh year—and included (1) the attack by Nebuchadnezzar *three years after Jehoiakim began paying tribute* (620 B. C.); (2) the taking of some of the Temple vessels to Babylon in 617 B. C. when Jehoiakim's eleventh-year and Jehoiachin's three-months reigns were forcibly ended by Nebuchadnezzar (617 B. C.); and (3) the first taking of the first captives to Babylon at the same time. This was eleven years before the final captivity and the beginning of the "desolation" of the land.

The foreign relations of Jehoiakim were briefly as follows:

For eight years (628-620 B. C.) he was tributary to Egypt or at least non-tributary to Babylon: "And Pharaoh-necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. . . . And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaoh-nechoh."—2 Kings 23:34, 35.

In his eighth year Jehoiakim was forced to begin paying tribute to Babylon. During his eleventh and last year, which would be the *third* year of his vassalage to Nebuchadnezzar (617 B. C.), he attempted an alliance with Egypt, and refused to pay the promised tribute to Babylon. This course brought upon him the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar, a Chaldean invasion, his own death, and the captivity of his successor, Jehoiachin, many Jews, including Daniel. (2 Kings 24:12) Zedekiah was then placed upon the throne as Nebuchadnezzar's vassal, and reigned eleven years, until dethroned in 606 B. C.

### THIRD YEAR OF JEHOIAKIM'S VASSALAGE

A discrepancy in Daniel 1:1, 2 is manifest in the date, "the *third* year of Jehoiakim" (626 B. C.); for this would have been one year prior to the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, which began in the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim (625 B. C.), when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh-necho of Egypt: "Against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim". (Jeremiah 46:2) "The *fourth* year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon."—Jeremiah 25:1.

Carchemish is by the river Euphrates in the land of Mesopotamia or Babylonia. The king of Egypt had passed by Judea and was some 400 miles to the east. Babylon at this time was not a world power but this victory by Nebuchadnezzar broke the power of the king of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar was quick to follow his advantage and drove the king of Egypt back to his own country, thus changing the nominal control of Pales-

tine from Egypt to Babylon. Pharaoh-necho was probably three or more years on this campaign.—Compare 2 Chronicles 35:20; 36:1.

The two dates—third and fourth years—cannot be reconciled; and as the fourth year was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, we must conclude that the "third year" mentioned in Daniel 1:2 refers to another *third* year than the third year of Jehoiakim's reign proper—the third year of his vassalage to Babylon, which began in 620 B. C. and ended with his rebellion and death in 617 B. C.

According to the Jewish historian Josephus, the reign of Jehoiakim included no Chaldean attack on Jerusalem in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jehoiakim's fourth year—625 B. C.), but the first attack came four years later, in Nebuchadnezzar's fifth year (Jehoiakim's eighth year—621 B. C.), and the vassalage of Jehoiakim's country dated from that or the next year (620 B. C.). This clarifies Daniel 1:1, 2, showing "the third year" to refer to the third of Jehoiakim's relations with Babylon, and not to the third year of his eleven-year reign. Josephus says:

"Now in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim [625 B. C.] one whose name was Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians, who at the same time went up with a great army to the city Carchemish, which was at Euphrates, upon a resolution he had taken to fight with Neco, king of Egypt, under whom all Syria then was. . . . The king of Babylon passed over Euphrates, and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, *excepting Judea*.

"But when Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years [621 B. C.] which was the eighth of Jehoiakim's government over the Hebrews, the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim, and threatened, upon his refusal, to make war against him. He was affrighted at his threatening and bought his peace with money, and brought the tribute he was ordered to bring for *three years* [until Jehoiakim's eleventh and last year, 617 B. C.]

"But on the *third year* [Daniel 1:1], upon hearing that the king of the Babylonians made [or probably planned] an expedition against the Egyptians, he did not pay his tribute; yet was disappointed of his hope, for the Egyptians durst not fight at this time."—Ant. IX, 6:1, 2.

The Bible record of this is in 2 Kings 24:1—25:7. Josephus makes no mention of an attack on the Jews by Babylon in 625 B. C., but specifically says that Judea was excepted then from the general attack. The Jews, on account of their numbers and the strength of their inland and easily defended mountain position, were let alone for four years (until 621 B. C.), after which their vassalage to Babylon began. There was no captivity of the inhabitants until the fall of Jehoiakim and of Jehoiachin in 617 B. C. This is according to Jewish records, but the commonly accepted idea ignores Jewish history for the reason that it cannot make them agree with the notoriously untrustworthy pagan records.

The "third year of Jehoiakim" (Daniel 1:1) was therefore the third full year of his vassalage to Nebuchadnezzar which was the end of his eleven-year reign (617 B. C.). The Daniel 1:1 record was written in



Babylon and took the Chaldean viewpoint of the third year of Jehoiakim's relationship with Babylon. The events which then took place agree with the Scriptural record of the taking of some of the Temple vessels and of many Jews captive into Babylon in 617 B. C., eleven years before the desolation:

#### FIRST CAPTIVITY BEGAN 617 B. C.

The record of the historian Josephus of the captivities of the Jews in 617 B. C.—the first of the captivities—is as follows:

"Now a little time afterwards [617 B. C.], the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim, whom he received [into the city], and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of this prophet [Jeremiah], as supposing that he should suffer nothing that was terrible, because he neither shut the gates nor fought against him; yet, when he was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants which he had made, but he slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity, together with their king Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial, and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country and of the city: he also took the principal persons in dignity for captives, three thousand in number, and led them away to Babylon, among whom was the prophet Ezekiel, who was then but young."—Ant. X, 6:3.

The Bible record of this captivity at the close of Jehoiakim's reign is given in 2 Kings 24:2-6; 2 Chronicles 36:6; Daniel 1:1, 2; and Jeremiah 22:13-19. In this matter many writers on this subject have been misled by attempting to harmonize these events with unreliable pagan records. The pagans in all their affairs were under demonistic influence, and to attempt to follow them in doubtful matters is to fall into error and entanglement.

In the same year (617 B. C.), three months later, took place the second part of the initial captivity of the Jews, under Jehoiachin, to Babylon. (Jeremiah 52:28) This is described by Josephus as follows:

"But terror seized on the king of Babylon, who had given the kingdom to Jehoiachin and that immediately; he was afraid that he should bear him a grudge, because of his killing of his father, and thereupon should make the country revolt for him; wherefore he sent an army and besieged Jehoiachin in Jerusalem; but because he was of a gentle and just disposition, he did not desire to see the city endangered on his account, but he took his mother and kindred, and delivered them to the commanders sent by the king of Babylon, and accepted of their oaths, that neither should they suffer any harm nor the city, which agreement they did not observe for a single year; for the king of Babylon did not keep it, but gave orders to his generals to take all that were in the city captives, both the youth and the handicraft men, and bring them bound to him; their number was ten thousand eight hundred and thirty-two; as also Jehoiachin, and his mother and friends; and when they were brought to him, he kept them in custody, and appointed Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah to be king."—Ant. X, 8:1.

The Bible record of this is in 2 Kings 24:10-17; 2 Chronicles 36:9, 10; and Jeremiah 52:28.

After the departure of Jehoiachin and the Jewish captives to Babylon, some false prophets among them

at Babylon kept the minds of the captives in unrest by predicting only a brief captivity. To quiet this unrest Jeremiah, in 617 B. C., in a letter (Jeremiah 29:1-23) counseled the captives to settle down and make themselves as comfortable as possible in anticipation of a long period away from home, because the seventy years—to begin in 606 B. C.—were surely to be accomplished at Babylon. (Jeremiah 29:10) No one knew then when the seventy years were to begin. This was not understood by Daniel till the first year of Darius. (Daniel 9:1, 2) It is asserted that Jeremiah's letter (617 B. C.) marked the beginning of the "seventy years"; but this is not the case. As a matter of fact, the Prophet had uttered this very warning in 625 B. C. (Jeremiah 25:1-38; 29:11, 12), eight years before there was any captivity at all; for Judea and Jerusalem were not molested in 625 B. C. nor until four years later, when Jehoiakim, under fear of Nebuchadnezzar's threats, became a tributary vassal to Babylon.

The various nations also were to serve Babylon seventy years, but the servitude of different nations began at different times, from Philistia in 625 down to Tyre in 606 (or 605) B. C., the latter city's preliminary siege beginning (618 B. C.) thirteen years before its fall (605 B. C.) according to the article on *Nebuchadnezzar* in "Smith's Bible Dictionary". The predicted seventy years' servitude of *all* the nations was, however, practically coincident with the seventy years' desolation of Judea, though some served more than seventy years. No one date prior to 606 B. C. can be set as meeting all the requirements of the prophecy of Jeremiah 25:13-28. A seventy-year period upon Tyre had been prophesied by Isaiah (23:15-18); and as this agrees in terms with the Jeremiah prophecy (Jeremiah 25:11, 22), the seventy years' servitude of Tyre to Babylon could not have begun earlier than 606 or 605 B. C. Any close examination then of the facts shows that not even the prophecy of seventy years' servitude or captivity upon the nations began to be fulfilled on *all* of them in 625 B. C. nor earlier than 606 B. C. The expression of Isaiah 23:15 is that "Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years [as an independent people], according to the days of one king [kingdom, empire]". Knowing that in prophecy "king" is often used for "kingdom" (Daniel 11:11-14, etc.), the "one king" evidently refers to the seventy-year dominion of Babylon from 606 to 536 B. C. No other explanation of these passages meets all the conditions of prophecy and fulfillment.

A further difficulty comes to light in comparing Daniel 1 with Daniel 2. In Daniel 1 the statement is that the four Hebrew lads were given three years training before presentation to the king. (Daniel 1:5, 18-20) In Daniel 2:1 it is stated that Daniel was brought before the king and revealed and explained the image dream in Nebuchadnezzar's *second* year, which would thus have been a year or two before they were presented to the king as recorded in Daniel 1:18! The

Variorum Bible foot-note reading for "second" is "twelfth", the "second" being evidently a slip of a copyist's pen, like the slip of the pen from eighteen to eight in 2 Chronicles 36:9 and 2 Kings 24:8.

The "twelfth" year of Nebuchadnezzar agrees with the facts. It would be in the year 614 B. C. (625 minus 11 equals 614), three years after the captivity of Daniel and the other three Hebrew lads, Ezekiel and others, and the expiration of their three years' training — three years after 617 B. C., or 614 B. C. (Daniel 1:5, 19). Thus the disclosure of the truth about Daniel 1:1 and 2:1 removes the entire foundation for the notion that the Hebrew captivity began in 625 B. C. and that 625 B. C. was the beginning of the 70 years.

No one knew better than the captive Jews in Babylon when their captivity began. They never dated the initial captivity from the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (625

B. C.), but from the end of Jehoiachin's three-months' reign and the beginning of Zedekiah's (617 B. C.) a date which by no method of reckoning can be made the beginning of a seventy years' captivity. References to this are numerous in Ezekiel, as, "the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity" (Ezekiel 1:2), "in the five and twentieth year of our captivity" (Ezekiel 40:1), and numerous other verses. The captive Jews knew nothing of a captivity beginning in Jehoiakim's fourth year, or Nebuchadnezzar's first year. If there had been such a captivity it would naturally have been mentioned elsewhere than in the doubtfully-dated Daniel 1:1. These facts dispose of the assertion that the seventy years' captivity began in 625 B. C., and show that so far as the Bible and Jewish history are concerned our chronology, which places the beginning of the "seventy years" in 606 B. C., is correct.

## GENERAL CONVENTION AT CEDAR POINT

**D**URING the past two years there has been a great demand for another general convention. The high cost of transportation and of hotel accommodations has been the chief cause for not holding such a convention. But realizing the importance of a general assembly of the Lord's consecrated ones for a season of fellowship together, an effort has been put forth to arrange for a general convention for 1922.

The convention held at Cedar Point, Ohio, in 1919, is generally conceded to have been the greatest ever held during the harvest period, and frequently the brethren are heard to say that they long for another such convention. We are glad to announce that arrangements are practically complete for holding another general convention at Cedar Point on beautiful Lake Erie, beginning September 5 and continuing for eight, and possibly ten, days.

### TO BE AT CEDAR POINT, OHIO

Cedar Point is situated on a narrow peninsula jutting out from the Ohio mainland into Lake Erie. It has the advantages of the lake from three sides. For quietness and seclusion we know of no better place. The friends can be practically alone during the convention and have sweet fellowship together. The grounds are situated some two miles across the bay from Sandusky, Ohio, which is reached by ferry, as well as by a roadway; and those who will attend from the outside will be people who are truly interested in knowing something about God's Word, and it will be a real joy to have them present and render any assistance we can to them in understanding the divine plan.

The Boeckling Company, desiring to show its appreciation of the Bible students, has arranged to let the Association have the exclusive use of the hotels, halls, grounds, etc., of Cedar Point for its convention, which will begin September 5 at noon. On this peninsula are

situated two good hotels, The Breakers and The Cedars, which accommodate approximately 3800 people. Good accommodations can also be had at Sandusky. A flat-rate of \$2.00 per day has been made to all of the brethren attending the convention. This will include room and three meals, to be served of first-class food. When the capacity of the hotels and other accommodations on the peninsula are exhausted, the overflow will be placed in Sandusky in private homes and hotels; and the management of Cedar Point has agreed to provide these quarters at the same rate, and to transport by boat all who will necessarily have to go from Sandusky to Cedar Point, back and forth, free of charge.

We shall have the exclusive use of the auditoriums, which have been improved since we were there before. The weather is usually ideal in the first part of September; and we may find it advantageous to hold outdoor meetings, as was the case in 1919.

There are a number of colporteurs and others of the Lord's dear consecrated ones who may find it difficult to get to the convention and pay their expenses. Hence an arrangement has been made that the management of Cedar Point will employ approximately two hundred to assist in taking care of the rooms, checking the linen, assisting in the dining room and the kitchen. Able-bodied brothers and sisters can engage in this service if they so desire, and for this assistance will receive their room and board free. Those who wish to engage in this work should make application to our Convention Committee in advance of the time of the convention. It is the Association's desire to have all the colporteurs in the United States and Canada to attend this convention, if possible.

### MEETINGS FOR FOREIGN FRIENDS

In addition to the English-speaking brethren, it is the desire to have the foreign brethren attend this convention, also; and they will have their separate meetings



# WATCH TOWER

And Herald of Christ's Presence

ROCK OF AGES  
Other foundation can  
no man lay—  
A RANSOM FOR ALL

"Watchman, What of the Night?  
The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah

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"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot  
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will  
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them  
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

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Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24: 33; Mark 13: 29; Luke 21: 25-31.

## SEVENTY YEARS' DESOLATION (PART II)

*"Them that had escaped from the sword carried he [Nebuchadnezzar] away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath to fulfill threescore and ten years."—2 Chronicles 36: 20, 21.*

A FEW of our readers have been somewhat confused in their understanding of present-truth chronology by the claim that it does not agree with ancient secular history. This carries the inference that the chronology cannot be correct unless it is in agreement with secular-pagan history and chronology, and that this agreement is desirable and indispensable. We present some considerations from which the reader may judge whether it is desirable to attempt to rely upon prehistoric pagan records derived from gentile "history" and from the inscriptions on Assyrian monuments.

### EARLY PAGAN "HISTORY" UNRELIABLE

A change was made some two hundred years ago from the ancient and true belief in seventy years' *desolation* of the land to seventy years' *captivity*. This was done by ecclesiastics to make the Bible record agree with pagan records, and was in thorough harmony with the spirit of compromise that has possessed ecclesiasticism since the time (325 A. D.) when Constantine, under demon influence, transformed the independent true church of God into a servile religious department of the pagan government—which it is today. It is nothing to be surprised at that a churchianity composed largely of pagans and demon worshipers, should prefer pagan and demon influenced records to the straightforward and truthful records of the Word of God and of Jewish history.

The pagan historical records, especially of date as early as the seventy years' desolation, are extremely obscure, contradictory, and unreliable, so much so as to fall outside the domain of history into the realm of surmise, guesswork, hearsay, and conjecture. It is upon such a secular prehistoric basis that the error rests that the seventy years began nineteen years earlier than they actually did.

We will illustrate the unreliability of early pagan records concerning affairs prior to Cyrus, 536 B. C. Milman in his "History of the Jews" (Volume 1, page 460) speaks of "the intricate and inextricable labyrinth of Assyrian history and chronology".

The uncertainty of those early pagan records cannot be shown better than by giving the facts about the sources of information. The entire so-called pagan "history" of antiquity is a mass of guesses, and furnishes no sound basis for so important a step as discrediting the divinely-made prophecy and the divinely-recorded fulfillment of the seventy years' *desolation*. The three ancient pagan "historians" from whom data are taken

are the Greek writers Herodotus (450 B. C.) and Ptolemy (150 A. D.) and the Chaldean writer Berosus (260 B. C.). Concerning Herodotus as a "historian" the facts are as follows:

In the article on "Medes" "Smith's Bible Dictionary" says:

"That the chronological dates [of Herodotus] are *improbable*, and even *contradictory*, has been a frequent subject of complaint. . . . Recently it has been shown that the whole [Herodotus] scheme of *dates* is *artificial*, and that the very names of the kings, except in a single instance, are *unhistorical*. . . . The Median kingdom did not commence so early as Herodotus *imagined*. . . . The Deioes and Phraortes of Herodotus are removed from the list of historical personages altogether."

Dr. Francis Brown, D. D., of Union Theological Seminary, comments thus on the relative accuracy of the unconscious Greek "historians" and the writers of the Bible:

"The Greeks told fairy-tales that entertained their readers, but were largely *untrue*. The Hebrews, with their nearer position, and more frequent memorable contact, had also a *conscientiousness* and skill in annalistic writing which made their evidence in regard to the history of their neighbors important and trustworthy."—"Assyriology: Its Use and Abuse," p. 50.

### GUESSES OF "AUTHORITIES"

When almost any bit of "history" of the prehistoric pagan events of the seventy years is traced to its origin it is found to be a *guess* or *conjecture*, based by "authorities" (well-paid guessers) upon some scraps of uncertain tradition. The ecclesiastically-received history of Babylon of this period originated in a *guess* by an "authority". This appears in the article on "Belshazzar" in McClintock & Strong's "Biblical Cyclopedia," and shows the uncertain and conflicting tales on which was based originally the now discredited notion of seventy years "captivity" beginning in 625 B. C. First in the article are given the differing and contradictory accounts of Babylon's fall as recorded in the Bible, in Xenophon, a Greek writer (400 B. C.), in Berosus, a native "historian", and in Herodotus; then "it appears" so and so from the Assyrian monuments; and finally a *conjecture* is made by a modern "scholar" (guesser), which is the basis of the present utterances of "authorities" (highest-salaried guessers) on the pagan history of the seventy-year period. There are, indeed, other quite different ancient records, but these are resolutely ruled out or ignored by the "authorities"—as liable to let the common people into the fact that the matter is largely a *guess*.

The history of Babylon, as published by the "authorities," includes a certain definite list of kings, but other

"authorities" guess that there *may* have been other kings who failed to get into the history or into the inscriptions on the monuments. How the "authorities" differ is illustrated in the article on "Belshazzar" in McClintock & Strong's "Biblical Encyclopedia":

"A *totally different view* is taken by Marcus Niebuhr, who *considers* [guesses] Belshazzar to be another name for Evilmerodach, the son of Nebuchadnezzar. . . . He *considers* [guesses] that the capture of Babylon described in Daniel was not by the Persians, but by the Medes, under Astyages (i.e. Darius the Mede), and that between the reigns of Evilmerodach, or Belshazzar, and Neriglassar, we must insert a brief period during which Babylon was subject to the Medes."

Thus the "authorities" disagree in their *conjectures* on even the number and list of these prehistoric kings of Babylon. Not even the names of the Babylonian kings are certain, as appears in another extract from the same article:

"Belshazzar (Hebrew and Chaldean Belshatstsar) is the name given in the Book of Daniel to the last king of the Chaldeans. . . . Herodotus calls this king, and also his father, Labynetus, which is *undoubtedly* a corruption of Nabonnedus, the name by which he was known to Berosus in Josephus' 'Contra Apion I. 20.' Yet in Josephus ('Antiquities' X, 11:2) it is stated that Baltasar was called Naboandel by the Babylonians. Nabonadius in the Canon of Ptolemy, Nabonnedus in Eusebius, and Nabonnidochus in Eusebius are evidently other varieties of his name."

Ptolemy, ancient Greek "historian", made up a list called "Ptolemy's Canon" like a chronological table, which has been much used. This list, however, is unreliable in the dates of all events except those marked by an eclipse or other astronomical phenomenon which can be checked as to date by astronomical calculation. It was not compiled for 600 years after 485 B. C., and is highly inaccurate. For example, it says that Xerxes reigned twenty-one years. He actually reigned eleven years. It makes the date of Artaxerxes' reign nine years too late—465 B. C., when it was 474 B. C.—the pagan record thus supplying an inaccurate date from which to calculate the "seventy weeks" of the Jews. Comparing Daniel 9: 24, 25 and Nehemiah 2: 1, it is seen that the twentieth year of Artaxerxes was 454 B. C. His first year was 474 B. C. It is upon Ptolemy's Canon, and not upon the Bible, that the prevalent chronology of the seventy years is based. The "authorities" here attempt the impossible of transmuting guesses into certainties—and any Bible student is unwise to follow their leadership instead of that of the inspired Bible writers.

#### SUPPOSITIONS, THEORIES, CONJECTURES

The obscurity of pagan records and "histories" of those ancient times prior to 536 B. C., and their unreliability as a basis for belief, appear also in the following brief excerpts from articles in "Smith's Bible Dictionary". The words indicating uncertainty are italicized, and show the entire matter to be a mass of guesses and conjectures.

From the article on "Medes":

"Cyraxenes *must have been* contemporary with the later years of that Assyrian monarch," etc.

"The struggle with these tribes *may be* the real event represented by Herodotus," etc.

"Possibly his [Herodotus'] *may contain* a still larger amount of truth."

"It was *undoubtedly* after this," etc.

"The Babylonians, who were *perhaps* commanded by Nebuchadnezzar on the occasion."

"With regard to the nature of the government established by the Medes over the conquered nations, we possess but *little trustworthy evidence*."

"Herodotus in one place compares *somewhat vaguely* the Median with the Persian system."

"It is *perhaps* most probable that the Assyrian organization was continued by the Medes."

"This *seems* certainly to have been the case in Persia."

"The conquest of the Medes by . . . the Persians . . . is another of those *indisputable facts* [What is a disputable fact?] of remote history, which make the inquirer feel that he sometimes attained to *solid ground*."

"According to some writers [Herodotus] there was a close relationship between Cyrus and the last Median monarch."

"According to *Herodotus*, the Median nation was divided into six tribes, called Busæ, Paretaceni, Struchates, Arizanti, Budii, and Magi. It is *doubtful*, however, in *what sense* these are to be considered as ethnic divisions."

"We *may perhaps assume* from the order of Herodotus' list," etc.

"The original religion of the Medes *must undoubtedly* have been that simple creed which is placed before us in the earlier portions of the Zendavesta."

"The customs of the Medes *are said* to have nearly resembled those of their neighbors."

From the article on "Persians":

"There is *reason to believe* that the Persians were of the same race as the Medes."

"The religion . . . *seems* to have been of a very simple character."

"Neither do they *appear* to have had any priests."

"They were *probably* brought into contact with a form of religion very different from their own."

"*Herodotus* tells us that the Persians were divided into ten tribes, of which three were noble, three agricultural, and four nomadic."

"In remote antiquity *it would appear* that the Persians dwelt in the region east of the Caspian or *possibly* in a tract still nearer India."

"The first Fargard of the Vendidad *seems* to describe their wanderings."

"It is *impossible to determine the period* of these movements; but there *can be no doubt* that they were anterior to B. C. 880, at which time the Assyrian kings *seem* to have come in contact with Aryan tribes east of Mount Zagros."

"It is *uncertain* whether they are to be identified with the Bartsu or Partsu of the Assyrian monuments."

"If so, we *may* say that from the middle of the ninth to the middle of the eighth century B. C. they occupied southeastern Armenia."

"The leader of this last migration would *seem* to have been a certain Achæmenes."

"*Very little is known* of the history of Persia between this date (B. C. 700) and the revolt and accession of Cyrus the Great nearly a century and a half later."

"Of the circumstances under which this revolt took place we have *no certain knowledge*."

## BOASTFUL, LYING INSCRIPTIONS

Considerable reliance is placed by modern higher-critic "authorities" on the inscriptions on pagan monuments and on Assyrian clay tablets to help them correct the inspired Word of God!

The inscriptions were made by men, and are no more reliable than the men themselves. The degree of trustworthiness of even the modern oriental aristocrats and monarchs is generally estimated at a low figure. Who, for instance, would take the unsupported word of an oriental sultan on anything today, or of an occidental diplomat? The ancient sultans were even less trustworthy; their word could not be depended upon. A statement was a means to an end; a lie was as good as a truth, if it accomplished the desired purpose. Pagan monarchs were universally the tools of demons and, almost universally, children of their mental- and character-father the devil, the inventor and perpetuator of lies.

The Assyrian inscriptions were made by demon-controlled devil-worshippers, and are just as trustworthy as might be expected under the circumstances; for in unreliability they closely resemble the ancient pagan "histories" written by men of like character with the rulers. Occasionally these "histories" tell the truth, but generally speaking they relate a mass of fairy tales; and the monuments are first cousins to the histories.

Most of the inscriptions considered of historical value by the "authorities" (guessers) are the boastful statements of pagan kings—worshippers of the heathen gods Bel, Nabu, Marduk, etc. Cyrus was used by Jehovah to help the Jews, and may have been better than some, but the following extract from a monumental inscription serves to contrast this best of the boastful pagan rulers with David, the best of Hebrew kings:

"I am Cyrus, king of the world, the great king, the mighty king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters of the world, son of Cambyzes, the great king, king of Anshan, grandson of Cyrus, the great king, king of Anshan, great-grandson of Teispes, the great king, king of Anshan; and everlasting seed of royalty, whose government Bel and Nabu love, whose reign in the goodness of their hearts they desire. When I entered in peace into Babylon, with joy and rejoicing I took up my lordly dwelling in the royal palace. Marduk, the great lord [through the priests] moved the understanding heart of the people of Babylon to me, while I daily sought his worship. . . . To Ashur and Susa, Agade, Eshmunak, Zamban, Meturnu, Deri, to the border of Gutium, the cities beyond the Tigris, whose sites had been founded of old—the gods who dwelt in them I returned to their palaces, and caused them to settle in their eternal shrines. . . . And the gods of Sumer and Akkad, whom Nabonaid, to the anger of the lord of the gods, had brought into Babylon, at the command of [the priests, who wanted a monopoly] Marduk, the great lord, I caused in peace to dwell in their abodes, the dwellings in which their hearts delighted. May all the gods, whom I have returned to their cities, pray before Marduk and Nabu for the prolonging of my days, may speak a kind word for me and say to Marduk, lord of the gods, 'May Cyrus the king,' etc. —Barton's "Archæology and the Bible," pp. 385, 386.

The superstitious Cyrus evidently wished to propitiate all the gods within sight, and his desire to please also

Jehovah the God of the Hebrews may have occasioned his unexpected leniency to the chosen people. But the contrast is sharp between the foregoing and the reverential meekness of the following:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—David in the Twenty-Third Psalm.

This brings out in the sharpest possible contrast the difference between pagan demon-worshippers and the servant of Jehovah. Which is the more trustworthy—Cyrus or David? It is to the records of the former that the advocates of the new and improved chronology appeal. We continue to rely upon the inspired Word of Jehovah.

## RECORDS FALSIFIED BY KINGS

The pagan kings did not hesitate to falsify the monumental inscriptions. They left out whatever did not suit them, and altered the record of facts when that pleased their arrogant boastfulness. Two kings reigned together, but the inscriptions are written as though the reigns were successive. Some of the inscriptions make boasting claims as to the lengths of reigns—thousands of years to a reign.

An inscription exists in which in boastful language Sennacherib describes his disastrous campaign against Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:19; Isaiah 36, 37), but he says not a word about the miraculous obliteration of his army by the destroying angel. "Assyrian kings," says Dr. Brown, "never record their failures; but Sennacherib's admission that he did not take the city was held to be confirmation of 2 Kings 19:35-37, which describes a great destruction of the Assyrian army and a signal deliverance of Jerusalem."

The entire reigns of kings are omitted in the inscriptions at the option of succeeding monarchs. After the fall of Babylon in 538 B. C. the city was ruled by the "Darius the Mede" mentioned by Daniel. (Daniel 6:9, 11) Darius is considered to be Cyaxares II, a king of the Medes, who reigned at Babylon for two years until succeeded by the boastful Cyrus, but the inscriptions are silent regarding his brief reign. His reign was the fulfillment of Daniel's vision of the Medo-Persian empire to the effect that the Medes would reign first and after them the more powerful Persians. (Daniel 7:5; 8:3, 4) Those that rely on the monuments for the facts will never know anything about "Darius the Mede" or his two-year reign.

"Take the new Cyrus inscription," says Dr. Francis Brown, himself an interpreter of the inscriptions. "I mention only one of the points of difficulty which arise when these inscriptions are compared with the statements in the Book of



Daniel. They seem to leave no place for 'Darius the Median.' . . . The Darius who from Daniel 5:31; 6:1-28; etc., would appear to have followed the last Babylonian king, and preceded Cyrus, seems not to exist, according to the inscriptions."—"Assyriology: Its Use and Abuse," pp. 37, 38.

The fact is that Cyrus the braggart simply left Darius out of his inscriptions; but Dr. Brown takes the prehistoric pagan record seriously and continues in a way calculated to throw a *little doubt* upon the Bible:

"Now here is a historical problem of the first order. It needs no amplification. The issue is clear. I do not know what adequate solution can be offered for the difficulty. There is some solution, under which the Bible will suffer no damage, I am sure, but *who can tell us what it is?*"

A footnote throws a *little more doubt* upon the Bible by suggesting that the whole book of Daniel is a legend:

"A current answer [by a clergyman, of course] affirms the legendary character of the book of Daniel. But this is not enough. The origin of the legend is still to be explained."

Extracts like these display the fact that "authorities", who have invested much in their training to read difficult inscriptions and whose salaries depend on great reputations, prefer to regard the monumental inscriptions as more reliable than the Bible. Such are some of the "defenders of the faith" in the modern theological seminaries, and it is under their leadership that are unwittingly enrolled those that doubt the Scripturally and historically well-proved chronology of present truth.

#### UNTRUSTWORTHINESS OF ARCHÆOLOGISTS

Dr. Brown, however, is more cautious than some of the more ardent Assyriologists. In an address to young theological students he, though a teacher of Assyriology, warns the students against the *misuse of archæology*. We quote snatches of his address:

"Scientific advance is through guesses, more or less rash. . . . Assyriology has its guesses. . . . Great and infectious enthusiasm, but a sad lack of cool judgment and scholarly patience. . . . Overhaste in its employment. . . . The Assyriologists themselves have been guilty of many sins of excessive haste. . . . The Biblical scholar has not only, to his own undoing, taken the hasty conclusions of the specialists, and worked them into his expositions, but he has himself drawn hasty conclusions from them. . . . There has been in some quarters an unseemly voracity; everything has been swallowed; the simplest rules of critical inquiry have been forgotten. There has been blind trusting to authority, without weighing it, and an assumption of fact upon the mere say-so of some presumably honest scholar. . . . There is a wide difference between expecting a discovery and making one. . . . The Assyriologists, it must be admitted, have rather a slender basis for their date. . . . The blameworthy thing is that there has been no adequate care to guard against mistakes. . . . A constant and enforced shifting of ground. . . . Conclusions must not be jumped at. . . . He must not treat the hypothesis as an established fact, and build a dogmatic exposition upon it. . . . They ought to demand that fact be sharply distinguished from guess; that definite and intelligible reasons be assigned for opinions. . . . A complete list would give us a secure chronological basis for Assyrian history. In fact, we have no one complete list, but six or seven partial lists overlapping each other. . . . A respectable number of chronologists have assumed a break of forty-six years. . . . The vice of this method of handling the inscriptions lies here: that it involves a playing fast-and-loose with well-attested historical docu-

ments; hailing them eagerly when they say at once what you want them to say, but discrediting them with all your might when their utterances are troublesome to you. . . . unwilling to wait. . . not courageous enough to be candid," etc.—Brown's "Assyriology: Its Use and Abuse".

The foregoing are some of the varieties of unreliability in the presentation by "authorities" of the monumental records of antiquity. They could not be much worse. The Bible student following them is in a maze. He cannot tell what is true and what false in the inscriptions themselves, nor can he tell whether the "authorities" are dealing honestly and conscientiously with him in their presentation of what in their opinion they *guess* at or carelessly or willfully misrepresent.

#### DOUBTS, AND MORE DOUBTS

An ancient king once built a great labyrinth of intricate passages, and tradition has it that when he wished to get rid of someone he would have him turned loose in some remote corner of the labyrinth. So confusing were the passages that practically everyone starved to death without finding the way out. Prehistoric pagan chronology and "history" are a mental labyrinth in which the believers of any other than present-truth chronology find themselves. Every step of study brings new problems which take long study for solution, if they can be solved at all, and the unfortunate student finds himself "ever learning [something], and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth".—2 Timothy 3:7.

As Dr. Brown says:

"Assyriology is not a mere key to unlock doors. It offers a vast and complicated series of facts. It throws clear light on some things, and *partial light* on others, and reveals *dim outlines* of yet others. If we put ourselves in that light, we must be *willing to see all it shows us*. Assyriology is not simply an interpreter that stands outside and explains our Bibles to us. *It makes its way into our Bibles*, and even while it smooths over some of the old difficulties, it sometimes *unearths new ones no less troublesome*. It is the imperative duty of those who study—most of all those who teach, or expect to teach—the Bible, to recognize these new problems *in all their gravity and far-reaching import*. . . . We ought to be looking forward to a time, and preparing for it, when the average membership of our churches shall have a faith so full of living nerves and muscles that it will hold itself upright *beneath even such searching inquiries [doubts] as these*. . . . Whosoever undertakes to make use of Assyriology in behalf of the Old Testament *cannot shun them* [the doubts thus created]."—"Assyriology: Its Use and Abuse," pp. 29, 30.

This ideal of a church is a congregation of university graduates all learned and wise (1 Corinthians 1:26-29), trained in archæology and able to overcome the doubts raised weekly by their pastor and, for salvation from unbelief, trusting in the mental prowess of the infidel wolf in the pulpit before them. Bible students should not begin studying matter based on pagan records, without seeing how far their course will lead them and being willing to go all the distance into unbelief and to pay all the price—the crown of glory for the faithful.

But why should faithful believers, who have much service yet to render to their Master, worse than waste



their time on "science [knowledge] falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6: 20), when God has provided a *chronological bridge*, over the indecipherable pagan chronology of the prehistoric period in question, in the shape of prophecy and fulfillment of "seventy years' desolation"? It is another divinely-furnished bridge like that over the period of the Judges. (Acts 13: 19-21) It would be a foolish waste of time to attempt to work out the detailed chronology of the Judges; and it is equally wasteful to cast aside the divinely-given bridge over the seventy-year period of desolation and to try to establish connected, detailed facts from pagan sources; for that, in fact, is what is implied by reliance upon the currently accepted notions about the chronology of Babylonia copied in all encyclopedias and reference works from the same unreliable source.

#### FURTHER PROOF OF PRESENT-TRUTH CHRONOLOGY

There is a well known law of mathematics called "the law of probabilities". Applications of this law are frequent in everyday life in settling matters of doubt. In a family of children, if a certain kind of mischief is committed, the probabilities—indeed, the certainty—are that it was done by a certain one, and that the others assuredly did not do it. If some peculiar damage is done by night to a single house, then by the law of probabilities it may have been a pure accident; if done to two houses in the same manner it probably was not accidental but by design of some person; but if done to three or more houses in the same manner it passes out of the possibility of accident into the *certainty* of design.

The chronology of present truth might be a mere happening if it were not for the repetitions in the two great cycles of 1845 and 2520 years, which take it out of the realm of chance and into that of certainty. If there were only one or two corresponding dates in these cycles, they might possibly be mere coincidences, but where the agreements of dates and events come by the dozens, they cannot possibly be by chance, but must be by the design or plan of the only personal Being capable of such a plan—Jehovah himself; *and the chronology itself must be right.*

In the passages of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh the agreement of one or two measurements with the present-truth chronology might be accidental, but the correspondence of dozens of measurements proves that the same God designed both pyramid and plan—and at the same time proves the correctness of the chronology.

The agreement of the chronology with certain measurements of the Tabernacle and the Temple of Ezekiel further stamps the chronology as true.

It is on the basis of such and so many correspondencies—in accordance with the soundest laws known to science—that we affirm that, *Scripturally, scientifically, and historically, present-truth chronology is correct beyond a doubt.* Its reliability has been abundantly confirmed by the dates and events of 1874, 1914, and 1918. Present-truth chronology is a secure basis on which the

consecrated child of God may endeavor to search out things to come.—1 Peter 1: 11, 12; John 16: 13.

It is not necessary to show how if a change of 19 years were made in the chronology the time from Jacob to Jesus would become shortened from 1845 to 1826 years, and the entire system of dates based on the "Jewish parallels" would collapse; how the jubilee system dates would fall out of place from its present symmetry; how the 2520-year parallels would disappear; how the entire system of dates would be scattered; how there could be no foundation for faith in the resulting chronological jumble; and how there could be no sound reason for believing in the presence of the Lord, the place and work of Pastor Russell, the end of the age, the harvest work, or in any of the literature published by the Society. Many years ago all these matters were deeply considered by Pastor Russell, and he declared, in an article which we will soon republish, that a change of one year would destroy the entire system of chronology.

#### PRESENT-TRUTH CHRONOLOGY IS CORRECT

We have shown that the present-truth chronology is correct and others are incorrect because:

- (1) It is based squarely on inspired prophecy.
- (2) The fulfillment is recorded in the Bible and in the history of God's chosen people, the Jews.
- (3) The seventy years are all years of desolation.
- (4) There was no captivity and no vassalage of Judah in 625 B. C. from which to count the seventy years captivity or servitude.
- (5) Pagan "history" on the subject is unreliable.
- (6) The opinions of "authorities" on this pagan "history" are guesses and conjectures.
- (7) The monumental inscriptions are untrustworthy because of the untruthfulness and unreliability of the demon-worshipping and demon-controlled pagan monarchs.
- (8) The inscriptions omit some important facts and falsify others.
- (9) The archæologists are not conscientious or honest in presenting the inscriptions.
- (10) Reliance upon pagan history or archæology leads through worse doubts and ever more of them, into infidelity.
- (11) Present-truth chronology is correct beyond the possibility of a doubt.

Present-truth chronology is based upon divine prophecy and its Biblical fulfillment, that the seventy years were years of desolation, not part desolation and part captivity. The chronology stands firm as a rock, based upon the Word of God.

It is a matter of faith in Jehovah and in his inspired Word. (2 Timothy 3: 16) Those that lack faith in God's Word and cast about for needless help from admittedly lying pagan records, will doubtless receive according to their lack of faith. Those that stick closely to the Word will receive according to their faith.

# THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

— JULY 16 — DANIEL 5:1-31 —

IDENTITY OF BELSHAZZAR — GREATNESS OF THE CITY OF BABYLON — VANITY AND SACRILEGE — SERVICE WITHOUT STIPULATION —  
A REMARKABLE CORROBORATION.

*"God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—Ecclesiastes 12:14.*

FROM time to time the higher critics, who according to their own estimates of themselves are wiser than the Scriptures, meet with a rebuke at the hand of the Lord, as he causes some apparent inconsistency between the Bible record and the records of secular historians to be cleared up.

## IDENTITY OF BELSHAZZAR

Such an item has arisen respecting King Belshazzar, the chief figure in the events of our lesson. For years the higher critics claimed that there was no such man; that the monuments showed that the last king of Babylon was Nabonidus, whom the Bible does not mention; and that this was evidence that Daniel was mistaken. Now they have stopped saying anything about this item because an inscription has been brought to light which shows that King Nabonidus did have a son by the name of Belshazzar; and while this particular inscription does not specifically state that Belshazzar was king of the city and the province of Babylon, under his father Nabonidus, who was king over the whole Babylonian realm, yet the inference is fully justified, because the inscription at hand does show that Belshazzar was a man of great wealth, a money-lender and landlord on a large scale, a wholesale dealer in wool. These activities are such as might be expected in connection with a ruler of the period, or, indeed, of any period where big business was allied with big politics.

## THE CITY OF BABYLON

Babylon, at this time, from all descriptions must have been by far the most wonderful city of the world up to that time, and in some particulars has had no rival since. It was a very wealthy, luxurious city, not only enriched by the plunder of the palaces and temples of the nations conquered round about, but further enriched by the tributes paid by those nations year by year and by its mercantile traffic with all the nations of the world.

It was not only the largest city in the world but had the strongest fortress. The great plain on which it lay, a paradise of fertility and cultivation, was intersected by countless canals, both small and great, serving alike for irrigation and navigation. Babylon, built on this fertile plain, was said to be fourteen miles from north to south and fourteen miles from east to west, and the walls surrounding it 350 feet high. It had one hundred gates. The river Euphrates flowed through it, and was banked high on each side the stream with solid massive walls and intersected with water gates made of bronze. The historian says: "Babylon was the strongest fortress in the world. Even a small force of brave men could have held it for years." It would be the natural effect of having such riches and strength under his control to make King Belshazzar proud and self-confident.

At the time of our lesson the army of the Medes and Persians under the command of King Cyrus was besieging Babylon. This was the Cyrus who the Lord through one of his prophets declared should set free his people, the Hebrews. To all human appearance his besieging of the city of Babylon would be a hopeless task, a failure, so strong was that fortress. Yet the Lord had timed the fall of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, and no doubt providentially guided to the accomplishment of the matter at the time intended. While Belshazzar and the people of Babylon were

holding high revel, banquets, etc., convinced of the security, the impregnability of their city, Cyrus and his army were building a trench above the city into which in due time the waters of the Euphrates river were turned, and then, in the darkness of the night, the soldiers were marched through the bed of the river and gained an entrance to the city while its unsuspecting defenders were banqueting.

## VANITY AND SACRILEGE

On this same night the king gave a banquet in his chief palace to a thousand of his nobles and lords and ladies of the empire residing in the city. The enemy was little thought of. On the contrary, Belshazzar boasted of the impregnability of the fortress, and declared that the gods of the Babylonians were superior to all others. He pointed to the subject nations surrounding as evidences of this, and in derision called for the holy vessels that had been brought by his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar from the Jewish Temple, that he and his lords might drink from these to do honor to the gods of Babylon.

It was in the midst of this blasphemy and profanation of the holy vessels of Jehovah's Temple that a hand appeared and wrote in letters of fire upon the wall of the palace the words, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*. The king, his counselors, his nobles, the aristocracy of the world, were astounded and numbed. The apparition convinced them at once that some dire calamity impended. It was recognized as being of superhuman origin. The wise men, the astrologers, etc., were sent for to give an explanation and interpretation. They came, but failed.

The king's mother remembered Daniel and his relationship with Nebuchadnezzar. She had probably heard of the wonderful interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision by Daniel when all others had failed. The Prophet was evidently well known, and not far off, probably still engaged in some department of the government service and near the palace. He soon appeared, and his courage on this occasion is worthy of remark. He had a most painful duty to perform toward his superiors; for the king, as an autocrat, had the power of Daniel's life at his tongue's end.

The king had offered both wealth and honor to the wise man able to give the meaning of the remarkable writing, but the Lord's prophet showed that he was not mercenary and that his interpretation was not influenced by any such considerations. His answer was: "Let thy gifts be to thyself and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king and make known to him the interpretation."

## SERVICE WITHOUT STIPULATION

We may stop here long enough to learn a valuable lesson, to the effect that all who would be the mouthpieces of the Lord, and speak forth his Word, should, like Daniel, do so without stipulation of compensation. Only from this standpoint can any hope to be entirely free and untrammelled in speaking words of truth and soberness which may be very distasteful to those who inquire the mind of the Lord. Had Daniel thanked the king for the promised gifts, and thus accepted them as a reward for his service, he would have felt obligated to the king to such an extent that it might have warped his judgment, or have weakened his expression

of the Lord's message. And the king in turn would have felt that, having paid for the information, it should be a smooth, favorable message. And so it is with some of the Lord's servants in mystic Babylon. They have the opportunity presented to speak the Lord's Word; yet many of them are handicapped by reason of having received honors and robes, and are more or less inclined to hide and cover the message now due to Babylon in this its Laodicean epoch. They are bound by the chain of gold around their necks.—Revelation 8:14-22.

The aged Prophet displayed gentleness as well as fearlessness in the delivery of his message. It was stated as kindly as the truth would permit, but the truth was not withheld by reason of fear. He recounted to the king his father's exaltation to power, and ascribed it not to the god of Babylon, but to the God of Israel. He reminded him of how pride had been his father's downfall, resulting in his degradation to bestial conditions for seven times (seven years in this instance but apparently calling attention to the seven times, or 2520 years, of gentile dominion). He reminded Belshazzar of how in the end his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had acknowledged the God of heaven as the real ruler amongst men, and then he charged home to the king that instead of profiting by this experience, of which he well knew, he had lifted up his heart in pride, had ignored the only true God, and had even brought what he knew were the sacred vessels of Jehovah's service, to profane them in the worship and glorification of idols—"gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood and stone, which see not nor hear nor know." He pointed out to the king that he had thus dishonored and defied "the God in whose hand [power] thy breath is [the God of all life—Acts 17:28, 29], and whose are all thy ways [who has full power to control your course]." This true God he had not glorified, but dishonored.

By thus kindly but plainly showing the king the truth, the Prophet prepared the way for the exposition of the fateful words—"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

#### A REMARKABLE CORROBORATION

Students of the Hebrew declare that their records and traditions show that what was written (in Aramaic characters) was from the top down and from right to left (Hebrew custom), and that only the consonants were given, as is also Hebrew custom.

The king was helpless to interpret this; but Daniel, understanding Aramaic, recognized at once the components of the words Mina - Mina - Shekel - Half-mina, a reference to Hebrew coins, which we will explain shortly. To Daniel these consonants also stood for the words "Mene," signifying "numbered," "Tekel" meaning "weighed," and "Peris" meaning "divided."

Daniel was expecting the overthrow of the Babylon empire by the Medes and Persians; for 75 years before he had interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream as recorded in the second chapter. That was in the twelfth year of Nebuchadnezzar, 613 B. C. and this was in 538 B. C. two years before the first year of Cyrus.

Without doubt also Daniel was divinely guided to understand these characters and without doubt the Lord has just now brought to light their numerical values. See the letter

entitled "A Remarkable Confirmation" contained in our issue of January 1, 1919. We quote from the letter:

"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin, are Chaldaic terms taken from the Babylonian table of weights, and being translated from the ancient cuneiform in which they were written, would read: A minna, a minna, a shekel, a half minna. The table of weights is as follows:

20 gerah — 1 shekel

50 shekels — 1 minna

A minna therefore equals 1000 gerahs. Hence 'a minna, a minna, a shekel and a half minna' or two and a half minnas plus a shekel, reduced to gerahs, yields the highly significant number 2520.

"Thus, when Daniel pointed to this handwriting on the wall and said unto the gentile monarch: 'God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it; thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting; thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians,' we know he alluded not alone to the literal kingdom of Babylon, nor to the literal Medo-Persian empire, which succeeded it. Rather, he was prophetically declaring, 'After 2520 years of supremacy the gentile lease of power will expire, and the rulership of earth will then be divided and broken up and given to a two-fold empire'—the heavenly and the earthly phase of the Messianic kingdom. Gentile supremacy began, as we all know, with the overthrow of Israel's last king, in 606 B. C. Just 2520 years later, or in 1914 A. D., the process of *dividing* began, in exact accordance with 'the handwriting on the wall.'

"It is further observed that this number 2520 is distinctive in that it is the least common multiple of all the digits in our system of numbers; that is, it is the least possible number into which 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 may each and all be contained. Thus in a special sense it is an all-comprehensive number. No other number could be more appropriate for spanning the whole period of gentile lease of power; and it is, at the same time, exactly *seven* symbolic years in duration. Who indeed could doubt but that our chronology is correct! And do not present world events corroborate it in every sense? We now behold the dividing of earth's kingdoms. It began exactly on time. The Messianic kingdom is the next thing in order after the present dividing work is complete. Let us be patient a little while longer, and soon we shall see the salvation of the Lord."

The poet Heine has pictured the scenes of the lesson as follows:

"In the monarch's cheeks a wild fire glowed,  
And wine awoke his daring mood.  
With daring hand, in his frenzy grim,  
The king seized a beaker and filled to the brim,  
And drained to the dregs the sacred cup,  
And foaming he cried as he drank it up,  
'Jehovah, eternal scorn I own  
To thee. I am monarch of Babylon.'

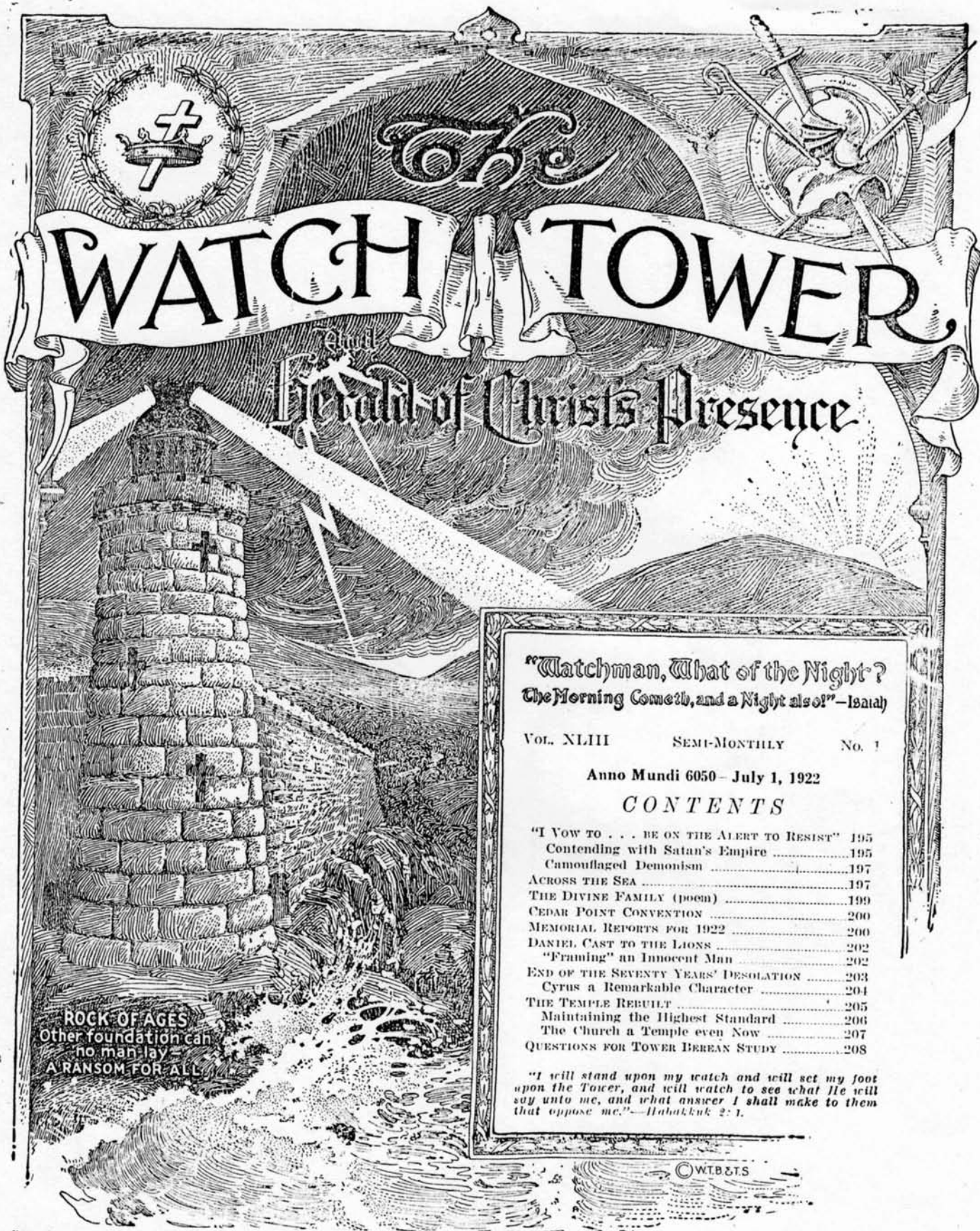
\* \* \*

"The yelling laughter was hushed, and all  
Was still as death in the royal hall.  
And see! And see! on the white wall high  
The form of a hand went slowly by,  
And wrote, and wrote, on the broad wall white,  
Letters of fire, and vanished in night."

#### WE OWN THY PRESENCE

Now, with glory undefiled,  
Reigns as King that lowly child;  
Takes his own, his righteous power,  
In the world's most troubled hour,  
—Lord, we own thy presence sweet,  
Shining o'er earth's mercy seat!

Help us hold thy loving hand  
Till we reach that golden strand;  
Let us love thee more and more.  
And thy gracious name adore,  
Till thy blessed face we see  
Throughout all eternity!



ROCK OF AGES  
Other foundation can  
no man lay  
A RANSOM FOR ALL

# *"Watchman, What of the Night? The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah*

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*"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot  
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will  
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them  
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.*

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Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism), shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24: 33; Mark 13: 29; Luke 21: 25-31.



makes the displeasure all the broader to include his counselors. He appreciated Daniel as a man of God and as an able servant of the empire, and set about at once to do everything in his power to annul his own decree. "He labored until the going down of the sun to deliver him"; but he found no excuse.

Ordinarily, when the kings desired to be released from some decree, they called upon their wise men and magicians, who usually were skillful in suggesting a way out of the dilemma; but in this case it would appear that there was a combination of all the wise men and rulers of Babylon against Daniel. They now had him in their power, and would suggest nothing in the way of release. On the contrary, they held up before the king that he was bound by his decree and that he could not do otherwise than execute it because a failure to do so would mean a dishonor to the empire in having broken its laws and would endanger his throne.

Accordingly Daniel was cast to the lions, but not before King Darius had expressed his hope and wish that in some way Daniel's God would be able to deliver him.

The conspirators were bent upon having matters thoroughly accomplished, and hence the stone (which covered the den and was probably fastened to its place with an iron bar) was doubly sealed with wax, to prove that it was not tampered with—one seal was the king's, the other that of the lords of the empire, who were amongst the conspirators, so that there might be no subsequent alteration of the conditions or delivery of Daniel during the night. If the lions were not very hungry at the moment Daniel was first cast in, it was reckoned that they would certainly become so before morning.

#### THE MOUTHS OF THE LIONS SHUT

Evidently the more the king thought respecting Daniel and his God the more his faith in that direction increased. He spent a sleepless night, and arose early in the morning and went to the den of lions and cried in a voice full of sympathy and sorrow: "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?"

The exemplary conduct of Daniel had had its effect upon the king, as expressed by the word, "*continually*." He had confidence that God was with Daniel, and that the God whom Daniel so sincerely worshiped and so intelligently trusted, must be more powerful than all other gods.

The heart of Darius was glad as he heard Daniel's voice saluting him, assuring him of his safety; and he at once caused him to be delivered from the den. Daniel expressed one reason for the Lord's deliverance. In the words, "Before him innocency was found in me—as also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." We note the fact that haughtiness and bravado are wholly lacking in the Prophet's announcement of the great favor of God manifested on his behalf.

As God's providence was over Daniel, permitting him to

come under the power of natural wild beasts, and making this a test of his fidelity to God and to principles of righteousness, so the Lord's providence sometimes permits his faithful ones to be exposed to the venom and malice and hate and misrepresentation and slander of human tongues, and of open persecution as in 1918, far more vicious and far more terrible every way than the wild beasts of the jungle, which can harm but for a moment. Nevertheless, as the Lord was able to deliver Daniel, he is not less able to send his angel (his providences) to shut the mouths of those who would do injury to his people.

#### PUNISHMENT OF THE CONSPIRATORS

The Scriptural record is that after Daniel's deliverance King Darius caused all the conspirators to be cast into the den of lions, and that thus they were all destroyed. The punishment which came upon these men was what the Scriptures designate a judgment, and we have the Scriptural assurance that when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth (when they are general) the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. When the kingdom shall have been established and the reign of righteousness shall have begun every transgression shall receive a just recompense of reward, every sin will be punished and every endeavor for righteousness will be blessed and rewarded. How speedily the world will learn righteousness we may readily judge. In the present time, although probably the majority of people would prefer righteousness to sin and injustice, yet under present conditions, under the dominion of the prince of this world, the righteous are the ones who usually suffer and the evil doers very generally escape—hence a doubt prevails respecting God and any enforcement of justice. The assumption is that if one can escape the technicalities of the law and the clutches of the law's officers in the present life he is safe and need not fear divine interference. We may readily see then that when the Millennial age shall have been fully ushered in, and when just penalty will follow each transgression and reward follow every good deed, a world-wide reformation or conversion to righteousness will follow forthwith in every land, in every tongue. In that glorious time the righteous shall flourish and the evil doers shall have the stripes, and eventually if they continue to be evil doers shall be cut off in the second death.

The intense hatred of the adversary for any representative of Jehovah is well represented in the effort, doubtless inspired by Satan, to destroy the prophet Daniel. At the present time the efforts of the evil one are directed, through the seed of the serpent, toward the weakening and ultimate destruction of the seed of the woman. That God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from all snares of the devil, is manifest from the miraculous deliverance of Daniel the servant of Jehovah, from what, humanly speaking, was certain death. But the Prophet's work was not finished, and he, like all true servants of Jehovah, was immortal until his work was done.

## END OF THE SEVENTY YEARS' DESOLATION

— JULY 30 — JEREMIAH 29: 10-14; EZRA 1: 1-11 —

GOD THE GREAT TIME-KEEPER — CYRUS A REMARKABLE CHARACTER — HIS HEART STIRRED BY JEHOVAH — "CHIEFLY THE POOR OF THIS WORLD" — BLESSINGS OF THE DESOLATION — THE RETURN FROM MYSTIC BABYLON — ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD.

"We know that to them that love God all things work together for good."—Romans 8: 28.

WHEN God had served his purpose of chastising Israel and of completing his typical prophecy—when the threescore and ten years of desolation of the land, in which the land had enjoyed her sabbaths, had expired, the return of the captives was due. The great clock of the ages pointed to the time for the return of the exiles, and,

like every other feature of God's plan, the deliverance of Israel from Babylon was promptly on time.

This return was in exact fulfillment of the Lord's Word at the mouth of Jeremiah, the prophet, who specifically told, not only of the destruction of the city, but also that it would be seventy years before the return of its inhabitants.

—Jeremiah 25: 12; 29: 10; compare 2 Chronicles 36: 22, 23.

The Scripture above cited established the fact with certainty that the seventy years predicted related to the entire destruction of the city of Jerusalem and desolation of their land and not merely to the captivity of the people. As a matter of fact, over 3,000 had been taken into captivity eleven years before, when Jehoiakim had been dethroned and killed. (Jeremiah 52: 28) In locating this period of seventy years' desolation, many have started with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar nineteen years previous and are thus thrown out nineteen years in their chronological calculations. Prominent historians have so accepted this error and gradually built historical data around it that the majority of religious writers now hold to that erroneous view. However, we stand by the Bible and it alone, wherever it differs from secular history.

The first year of Cyrus mentioned in our lesson is by general consent considered the beginning of the year 539 B. C. Evidently this does not mean that it was his first year of reigning as the king of Persia; but that, having conquered Babylon and accomplished other matters subsequently, this was the beginning of his reign over the united empire of the Medes and Persians as successor to Babylon in world empire.

#### CYRUS A REMARKABLE CHARACTER

One of the most wonderful things connected with the story of Israel's release from Babylonian captivity is that Cyrus was named by the prophet Isaiah 200 years in advance, and called "God's Shepherd"—"Cyrus is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." (Isaiah 44: 28) Profane history gives Cyrus a very honorable name, calling him "gracious, clement and just, treating men as men, and not as mere tools to be used and cast aside—a conqueror of quite a different type from any the world had previously seen." Plutarch declares: "In wisdom, virtue and magnanimity he seems to have surpassed all kings."

Nebuchadnezzar's theory of government was to bring representatives of the peoples of all lands to Babylon and there make them homogeneous, choosing the best of every nationality. But when Cyrus came upon the scene, as the conqueror of the Babylonian empire, he found that the theory of his predecessor had not worked out satisfactorily. The mixed people of Chaldea were not patriotic. Cyrus adopted the opposite plan for governing the world. He not only gave liberty to the Jews to return to their own land, and gave them assistance back, but he did the same for the people of other nations, exiled in Babylon.

#### HIS HEART STIRRED BY JEHOVAH.

We are not told by what agencies the Lord operated when he "stirred up" the heart of King Cyrus to fulfil the divine will by letting go the captives. Hence we are at liberty to surmise on the subject. We think it likely that, as Daniel was speedily made a high officer in the kingdom, he had access to the king, and quite probably called the king's attention to the Scriptures which marked him as the divine agent, even referring to him by name.—Isaiah 44: 26-28; 45: 1-5; Jeremiah 25: 1-12.

It is quite possible, also, that the Lord used other means to stir up the king's heart. Possibly Cyrus reflected that by such a course he would firmly establish himself in the good will of the Israelites, who numbered millions amongst his new subjects, and comparatively few of whom he might feel sure would avail themselves of his generous offer of liberty to return to their native land. It would appear that this was the custom of Cyrus in respect to the religions of all the various peoples whom he conquered. Moreover, he

may have had in mind the fact that Egypt was a country of great fertility, and that in case of war it would be of much convenience to have Jerusalem as a friendly way-station between his capital and Egypt.

The wording of the proclamation: "The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Juden," might seem to imply that Cyrus was a believer in and a servant of the true God; but we have no corroborative evidences to this effect: rather the records of his time refer to the heathen gods, but apparently make no mention of Jehovah. We are to remember that the heathen kings were at that time in the habit of recognizing the gods of the various countries which they governed, and wrote and spoke respectfully in reference to all of them, apparently with a view to preserving the respect for their realm of every creed amongst the worshippers.

#### "CHIEFLY THE POOR OF THIS WORLD"

When we remember the length of time the people had been in Babylon that scarcely any of the Jews living at the time of this emancipation proclamation had ever seen Palestine, that they had merely heard of it through their parents, and that only a few very aged men and women remembered having even seen the city as children, it will not surprise us that the total number volunteering to return to rebuild the city and the Temple was only 50,000. But they were a choice 50,000.

We may readily suppose that the majority of those who thought upon the Lord and who trusted in the promises made to the fathers, were poor; for it seems that in every case poverty is more favorable to religious faithfulness and zeal than is wealth. Yet the fact that some were both wealthy and zealous is abundantly testified to by the liberal contributions made by the captives themselves for the rebuilding of the Temple. The vast majority, however, were evidently well pleased with their foreign home, in which many of them had been born. Many had intermarried with their neighbors; many were immersed in business projects; and many perhaps felt themselves too old for such an undertaking. Thus did the Lord sift them, that he might gather back to the land of promise such only as had a fervent zeal for the Lord and a full trust in his promises.

The sifting of Israel began in the separation of the two tribes from the ten tribes; for the rapid spread of idolatry in the ten tribes gradually drew those faithful to Jehovah to the two-tribe kingdom, whose king was of the line which the Lord had promised to bless.

#### BLESSINGS OF THE DESOLATION

It is pleasing also to note that in the land of their captivity Israel were reclaimed from idolatry so thoroughly as never to return to it again; and then, without the temple and its services, they learned to appreciate what was left to them still—the Word of God and the teaching and counsel of some of the faithful ones among them, such as Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah; the forms of worship gave place to a more real heart-worship of the one true God; and they were led to a fuller appreciation of the privileges they had enjoyed, as manifested in Psalm 137.

The chief men of Judah and Benjamin, together with the priests and the Levites, took the lead in the matter of accepting the provisions of King Cyrus' decree. Concerning the others who returned from exile we read that they were "those whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem." (Verse 5) In what way the Lord raised their spirit, or disposition, we are not informed. We may suppose, however, that those whose hearts burned with faith in the divine promises to Israel,

and who were zealous to be and to do what would be acceptable in God's sight, would be awakened by the decree of King Cyrus, which was of God's instigation. The generosity of Cyrus was manifested in his sending back the precious vessels of the Temple, which must have been of immense value. The larger vessels are enumerated—in all, 2499. These, with the smaller articles not specified, amounted to 5400.—Verse 11.

It should be noticed, in reading Ezra's account of the return from captivity, that the division of the nation of Israel was no longer recognized after the return. They are invariably spoken of as "all the people of Israel"; and these statements are made repeatedly. The ten tribes of Israel were no more "lost"—as deluded Anglo-Israelites assert—than were the great mass of those carried away captive from Judah who neglected to return to Palestine under the proclamation of King Cyrus.

### THE RETURN FROM MYSTIC BABYLON

We have already seen that natural Israel's captivity in Babylon is Scripturally represented as a figure of the captivity of spiritual Israel in mystic Babylon; and that the deliverance by Cyrus was to some extent a representation of the deliverance of spiritual Israelites from mystic Babylon by Christ; that the fall of Babylon before Cyrus was figurative of the fall of "Babylon the Great," and that the message, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," applied not only to literal Babylon, but also now applies to mystic Babylon. In view of these things it is but proper that we should consider Israel's return from Babylon as to some extent representing the deliverance of the zealous of spiritual Israel from mystic Babylon—a work now in progress. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Revelation 18:4.

But now, as then, comparatively few, even of the consecrated class, are willing to undertake the trials and difficulties incident to the leaving of the settled affairs, comfortable quarters, contracts, engagements, etc., entered into in Babylon. The only ones disposed to risk the hardships and to go forth into the desert, leaving the strong walls and protection of sectarianism, are those who have great confidence in God and great respect for the promises made to the seed of Abraham. The call to return to the old paths, and to rebuild the Temple of the Lord, and to replace therein the vessels of gold and silver (the precious truths of the divine Word—setting them in order as at first) is appreciated by the few only; yet these are encouraged by the Lord's providences, by the riches bestowed upon them from every quarter—not riches of an earthly kind, but of a spirit-

ual sort,—precious truths, valuable lessons and experiences, providential leadings, etc. These encourage such as are of faithful heart to go forward and by obedience to become heirs of those glorious things that God has promised to them that love him.

No one should be urged to come out of Babylon. If ~~one~~ does not come out joyfully, "with singing," making ~~melody~~ melody in his heart to the Lord, glad of the opportunity of coming out, glad of the opportunity of getting away from the error and into the place of divine favor and inheritance of the divine promises, let him stay in Babylon. If he loves the things of this present time, the social advantages of Babylon, the business advantages and opportunities, the greater honor of men, the greater comfort and ease, let him so indicate to the Lord and refuse to respond to the Lord's message.

### "ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD"

While our text has some application to all who at any time have loved the Lord, yet it was written to Spiritual Israel, not Natural Israel, and its chiefest application is to the New Creation. Properly then, the questions arise, How are these things working better for us than for the world? Do not Christians die the same as unbelievers, the same as Jews, the same as Mohammedans, the same as the heathen? Do they not have their share of sickness, sorrow, and pain in connection with their dying experiences? Surely none can dispute the truthfulness of this suggestion! Wherein then, shall we say, is there an advantage in being a faithful spiritual Israelite? If all the world is redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, if all the world is to have a blessing under Messiah's glorious reign of a thousand years, and if the ancient worthies are to have the first place in the kingdom that will then be established under the whole heavens, what will be the advantage, if any, to those who have been faithful and loyal spiritual Israelites—to those who have come out of mystic Babylon, have endured hardness as good soldiers and have sought to lay down their lives in the Master's service, in the service of the brethren, in the service of the truth, in the service of God?

The advantages of this class are numerous, and lay hold upon the present life, as well as that which is to come. In the present time, it is the privilege of these to enjoy the peace of God, which passeth all human understanding. It is their privilege to know by faith that all things are working together for good to them because they love God. It is their privilege to realize that whatever may happen to others in the world, nothing can *happen*, so far as they are concerned. Their affairs and interests are all subject to a divine supervision. No wonder they can have peace in every storm! No wonder they are able to rejoice even in tribulation!

## THE TEMPLE REBUILT

— AUGUST 6 — EZRA 3:10-13; 6:14-17 —

TEMPLE RESTORATION DIFFICULT — MAKING MELODY IN THE HEART — MAINTAINING THE HIGHEST STANDARD — BUILDING THE TRUE TEMPLE — THE CHURCH A TEMPLE EVEN NOW.

*"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of Jehovah."—Psalm 84:2.*

THE returning Israelites left their friends in Babylon, full of zeal, and to some extent admired by their more worldly-wise compatriots, who preferred to remain in the foreign land. The escort granted them by the king, the presents of money, and the costly vessels of the temple service, were with them; and their hopes ran high as they began their journey of nearly 800 miles, about the distance from Philadelphia to Chicago. According to tradition, they must have been about four months travelling, whereas an express train in our day would make the distance in seventeen hours.

The toilsome journey ended, they finally rested at Jerusalem, only to find still greater discouragements. But a very few of them had ever seen the place before, and those few had seen through the eyes of childhood, for the city had lain desolate, according to the Word of the Lord, for seventy years. (2 Chronicles 36:21) The wall and the temple had been demolished by Nebuchadnezzar's orders, and many of the private residences were also left in ruins, and now for seventy years of such desolations, "without inhabitant," the place was a wilderness. Trees were growing in what formerly were streets. Everything was disorder. Any other

class than those full of faith and zeal, as these were, would have been utterly discouraged.

We are to remember that the Lord thus tries our courage, and faith and zeal, not to destroy these qualities, but to deepen and fix them—to establish us, to develop us in character. As with the typical Israelites there, so it is now with the spiritual Israelites—all such trying experiences, under divine providence, will work out to our advantage if we will but persevere in our faith, and love and zeal.

It required more than a year to put themselves in reasonable condition for living, and then their attention turned to the rebuilding of the temple. That they should have begun so soon to think of the house of the Lord speaks well of their spiritual condition. They appear to have immediately located in their various cities, which had been neither entirely destroyed nor occupied by other people during their absence, but in condition to be re-inhabited. They had probably started from Babylon early in the Hebrew year; and if they spent three or more months en route, they doubtless reached Palestine about the fourth month. By the seventh month they assembled at Jerusalem for the day of atonement services.—Ezra 2:70; 3:1-7.

### MAKING MELODY IN THE HEART

Full of zeal for the Lord's cause, the people celebrated the corner-stone laying of the new temple with joy and zeal. One of the special features of their worship was praise; and we think it safe to say that singing the Lord's praise has been amongst the greatest blessings and privileges of worship enjoyed by the largest number of the Lord's people throughout this gospel age also. The power to praise God in song has been conferred upon man only of all earthly creatures, and how appropriate that he should use this power to praise the King of kings!

If those Israelites, the house of servants, returning from their bondage and remembering the covenant promises of God to them, had cause for singing and shouting Jehovah's praise, much more have we, who belong to the house of sons and have come out of Babylon, great cause to tell abroad the great things which the Lord hath done for us. We were all servants of sin once, under the bondage of sin, ignorance, superstition and death, but God, through the Great Cyrus, has permitted us to go free. Appropriately, therefore, our first step should be to recognize the sacrifice of the altar, and then offer praise to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, for "he hath put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God."

The Apostle assures us that, however appropriate, inspiring and refreshing are the songs of our lips, still more appropriate and still more appreciated of the Lord are our heart-songs, the joy and rejoicing of the new mind—"singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord." (Ephesians 5:19) And this joy and singing in the heart, this heart-thankfulness to the Giver of all good, necessarily finds expression, not only in Christian carols, but also in all the acts and words of life—all of which constitute the hymn of praise and thanksgiving continually ascending before God from his people.

The shouts were discordant—some of joy, some of weeping. Those who looked forward in hope shouted for joy. Those who looked backward, and pictured before their minds Solomon's grand temple, wept as they thought of the insignificance of the present one in comparison. And so today among spiritual Israelites, there are some who weep for the past, when they should be rejoicing for the future. The Apostle exhorts us to "forget the things which are behind, and to press forward to the things which are before." The lessons we learn from past experiences, even from adverse experiences, while they should be kept in memory,

need not be mourned over by spiritual Israelites; for they can call to mind that the merit of Christ's sacrifice covers all of their unwilling blemishes and mistakes. Carrying with them their experiences they should press forward to fresh victories and fresh joys in the Lord.

### MAINTAINING THE HIGHEST STANDARD

That the expression "without an inhabitant" did not refer to individuals of other nationalities is implied in the expression the "people of the land," who were there when the Jews returned. There is no reason to believe that there were any Jews whatever in the land for the entire period of seventy years, as foretold by Jeremiah.

These "people of the land" (subsequently known as Samaritans) were disposed to be friendly to the returned Israelites, and proffered their aid in the building of the temple. But their assistance was refused; for the Israelites realized that if these "strangers" were permitted to share in the work of constructing the temple they could with propriety claim a share also in dictating the character of the worship which would be established there; and that this would open the door to laxity in religious matters, and perhaps to the old idolatry, on account of which the Lord had so severely chastised Israel.

When "the people of the land" found that their money and services were not acceptable, and that they could have neither part nor lot in the construction of the Lord's house, it offended them and made them enemies; and from that time onward they persistently opposed the work of the Israelites. So it will be with spiritual Israel. Those who conscientiously live separate from the world in spiritual matters, and recognize as brethren in Christ only those who confess to circumcision of the heart and adoption into God's family, will find themselves opposed by moralists, liberalists and higher critics, as well as by the masses, who hate the light, because it condemns their darkness—doctrinal and otherwise. Nevertheless, this is the only good and safe course to pursue. Better far is it that only true Israelites should be recognized as brethren, and thus the wheat be separated from the tares.

Some one has well said: "The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One lowers the standard of doctrine, also; for the minister who realizes that at least three-fourths of his congregation would be repelled by the presentation of strong meat of truth, withholds the same, and permits those who need strong meat, and could appreciate and use it to advantage, to grow weak, to starve. Furthermore, the worldly spirit and the fuller treasury have attracted "strangers" into the professed ministry of the gospel, many of whom know neither the Lord nor his Word, and who consequently are thoroughly unprepared to feed the true sheep were they ever so well disposed. One of the great difficulties with Christianity today is that it has admitted the strangers, the "people of the land," and recognized them as Christians. It does injury, not only to the Christians, by lowering their standards (for the *average* will be considered the standard), but it also injures the "strangers," by causing many of them to believe themselves safe, and needing no conversion, because they are outwardly respectable, and perhaps frequently attendants at public worship.

### BUILDING THE TRUE TEMPLE

In the light of the teachings of the apostles we see that the antitype of that temple was the one true church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven (1 Corinthians 3:16,17; Luke 10:20)—that it is a spiritual temple built up with living stones, of which Jesus Christ is himself the chief corner stone, the sure foundation. He became the foundation of this spiritual house when he gave his life



a ransom for many, and thus made possible the building up of other living stones upon this foundation until the wonderful structure shall reach its glorious completeness.—1 Peter 2:4-7.

When this foundation of the spiritual temple was laid, all who came to a realization of the importance of the great work thereby accomplished rejoiced and praised the Lord. And this rejoicing in the strength and security of the foundation of our hopes never ceases. Praise the Lord! wells up from every heart that realizes the redemption accomplished by the precious blood of Christ, shed for many for the remission of sins. Upon this sure foundation the temple structure has been gradually and steadily progressing. The living stones are taken out of the quarry (the world); and by the experiences and discipline of the present life they are shaped and chiseled and polished and thus fitted for their places in the temple which, during the time of the presence of the Lord—viz., since 1878, when he took his great power as king—is being noiselessly put together, as in the type, without the sound of a hammer—by the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the change of the living in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; for “blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth [from 1878]; . . . they rest from their labors [from the toil and weariness of labor], but their works follow with them.” They shall not sleep, but they shall be changed instantaneously from the human to a glorious spiritual body.—Revelation 14:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.

#### THE CHURCH A TEMPLE EVEN NOW

But while the church glorified with Christ the Head will be the temple complete and glorious, it is in a less complete

sense regarded as the temple of God now, and the various members as its builders, all having something to do in building each other up in the most holy faith, and thus contributing to the structure of the temple or church as a whole. This work of building up the church is very clearly set forth in the building of the typical temple; and the rebuilding of the temple after the captivity in Babylon is very suggestive of the rebuilding of the church after the long captivity in Babylon the Great—which is generally known as the Great Reformation. And truly there has been a great re-formation of the church since the dark ages of bondage under the papal yoke.

The work of re-formation has gone steadily forward and like that of the typical temple, in the midst of the great opposition. (See Ezra 4:11-24; 5:3-5; Nehemiah 4:7-23, and compare STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. II, Chapter ix and Vol. III, Chapter iv.) From the multitudes who had been enslaved under the papal rule some of the living stones of the true temple were gathered out and the work of setting them in order for the rebuilding of the New Jerusalem and its temple began. History records the opposition which these re-formers or builders, encountered; and truly, as in the type, “the builders, every one had his sword [the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God] girded by his side, and so builded.” (Nehemiah 4:18) Nor may this attitude ever be relinquished until the work is all complete and the glory of the Lord has filled his temple. The enemies of the Lord’s people and the Lord’s work are always active in opposition, and none the less so when their methods are subtle and their course not easily discernible. Hence the necessity exists for continued vigilance against every encroachment of the adversary, whether he come as a roaring lion or as a wily serpent.

## BEREAN QUESTIONS ON ARTICLES IN TOWER FOR JUNE 15, 1922

### SEVENTY YEARS’ DESOLATION (PART II)

1. Is it indispensable for Bible chronology to agree with ancient pagan records? P. 183, ¶ 1.
2. What spirit prompted the change from seventy years’ desolation to seventy years’ captivity? P. 183, ¶ 2.
3. Why are the pagan histories before 536 B. C. unreliable? P. 183, ¶ 3-5.
4. What are the facts about the unreliability of Herodotus and other ancient Greek historians? P. 183, ¶ 6-9.
5. How reliable are the “authorities” on this period of ancient history? P. 183, ¶ 10; P. 184, ¶ 1-3.
6. How much dependence can be placed on Ptolemy’s Canon? P. 184, ¶ 4.
7. Illustrate the uncertainty of the history before 536 B. C. P. 184, ¶ 5, col. 2.
8. Can the inscriptions on Assyrian monuments be relied upon? Why not? P. 185, ¶ 1-4.
9. How would you describe the contrast between the monumental records and David’s records? P. 185, ¶ 5-8.
10. Did the pagan kings always tell the truth in their monumental inscriptions? P. 185, ¶ 9-12; P. 186, ¶ 1-5.
11. Why are the archaeologists untrustworthy? P. 186, ¶ 6-8.
12. Does reliance on pagan records answer doubts or raise more doubts? P. 186, ¶ 9, 10.
13. What is the cost to a consecrated Christian of following pagan records? P. 186, ¶ 11.
14. What chronological bridges render it needless to depend on pagan records? P. 186, ¶ 12.
15. How does the law of probabilities help make present-truth chronology a certainty? P. 187, ¶ 1.
16. What three strong proofs are there of the truth of the chronology? P. 187, ¶ 2-4.

17. What can you affirm about present-truth chronology? P. 187, ¶ 5.

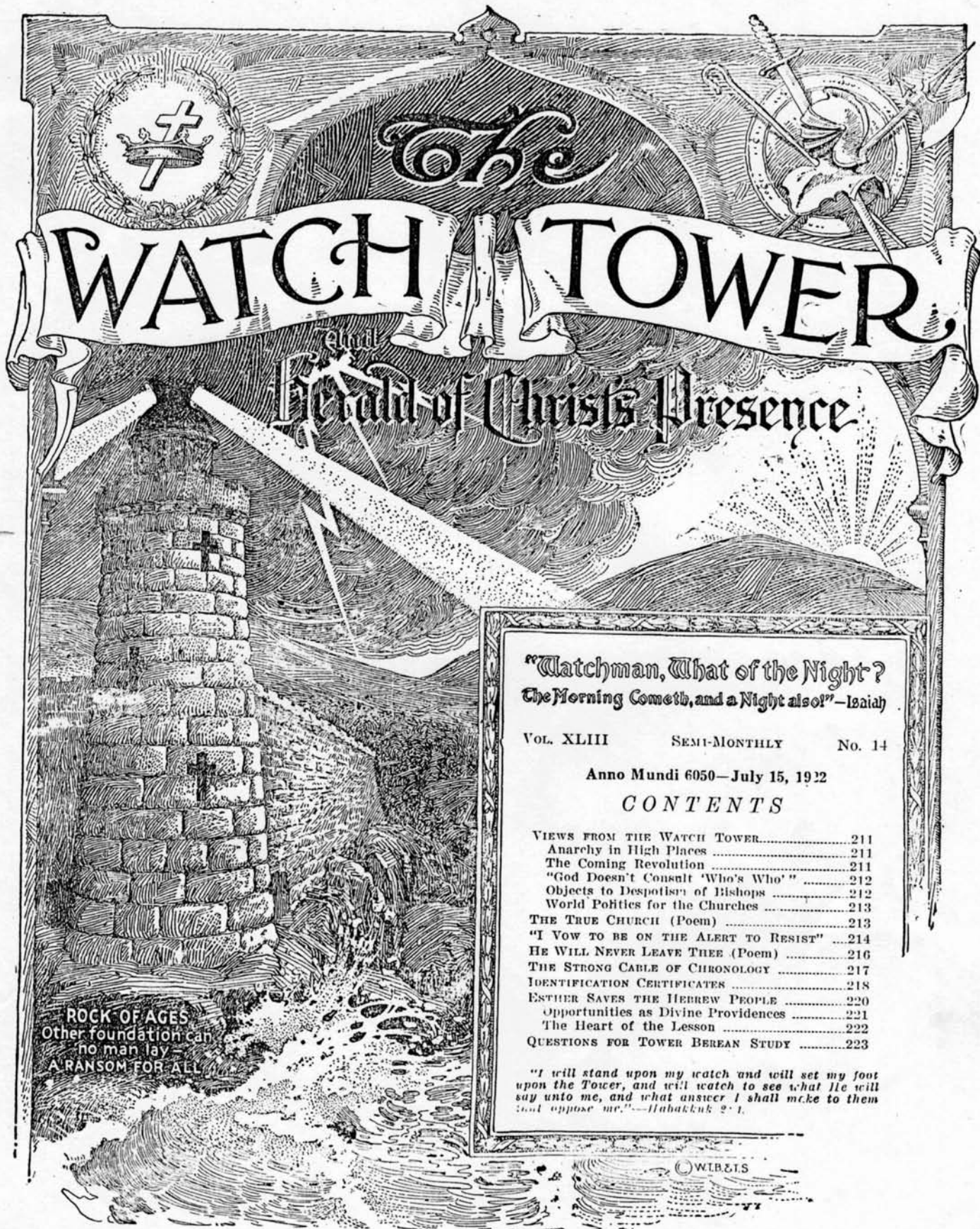
18. How would a change in the dates affect present-truth chronology? P. 187, ¶ 6.

19. How would you sum up the reasons why present-truth chronology is correct? P. 187, ¶ 7-end.

### THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

1. Who was Belshazzar? P. 189, ¶ 1, 2.
2. Describe Babylon. P. 189, ¶ 3, 4.
3. Could the fall of Babylon have been postponed or averted? P. 189, ¶ 5.
4. Relate the circumstances attending the appearance of the handwriting on the wall. P. 189, ¶ 6, 7.
5. How did Daniel preserve his freedom of speech? P. 189, ¶ 8-10.
6. Show the manner of Daniel’s interpretation to the king. P. 190, ¶ 1, 2.
7. How was the message written and what did the words mean? P. 190, ¶ 3, 4.
8. What was the date of this event? P. 190, ¶ 5, 6.
9. How does the handwriting corroborate the present-truth chronology? P. 190, ¶ 6-8.

“The Tishbite dread, Elijah, stood in Ahab’s ivory hall;  
His cloak the skin of mountain goat; his robe a mohair pall;  
His garb around his sinewy loins a raw-hide belt confined;  
His hair and beard, like raven plumes, streamed dark along the wind;  
A strong acacia’s spiky stem, scarce smoothed, was in his hand;  
His feet were fleshless, callous, bare, and tawny as the sand;  
His brow, a soaring crag, o’erhung his swart and shaggy chest;  
And ’neath its shades his eyes gleamed keen as eagles from their nest.  
Remote from courts, corruption, crime, in that high shepherd land,  
With God alone, his soul had grown to stature bold and grand.”



ROCK OF AGES  
Other foundation can  
no man lay —  
A RANSOM FOR ALL

## "Watchman, What of the Night? The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah

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"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot  
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what he will  
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them  
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

WILBETS

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism, snail) be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24: 33; Mark 13: 29; Luke 21: 28-31.

## THE STRONG CABLE OF CHRONOLOGY

**T**HE world has had many systems of chronology. Among these were the systems of Nabonassar, Macedon, Alexander, Tyre, Rome, the Jews, Creation, Diocletian, Christ, Armenia, Persia, the Hindu, and the Chinese, each counting from some national event and covering certain eras. These systems may be likened to chains or to strings of beads, each date being a link or unit in the whole. The relations existing between the dates have been that each date has been so many years after the preceding and so many years before the succeeding dates. An error in any one of these units upsets either all previous dates or all or some of the later ones.

Much reliance is still placed by historical writers upon some of these systems. The chronology of the Assyrian nations has been founded upon comparisons of events with the so-called Canon of Ptolemy, which was a string of dates which the Greek historian arranged centuries after the events, and which has been found full of inaccuracies. The Greeks every four years celebrated athletic games called Olympiads, the succession and number of which were quite faithfully preserved; and events in Greek history were recorded as taking place in such and such an Olympiad, often with the year in the Olympiad—first, second, third, or fourth—in which instances the date of an event, if correctly recorded in the ancient histories, can be relied upon to a considerable extent.

### OTHER SYSTEMS ARE CHAINS, NOT CABLES

Every chronology which consists of a mere string of dates is to be relied upon only as each successive date is correct. No known secular chronology has the entire system firmly knit together by connecting-links between dates which are not successive. Every chronology would be immensely strengthened if it were possible to say concerning each of the chief dates that it was, for example, 1,000 years after another event, 500 years after another, 200 years before another, and so on. Each such line of evidence would tend to establish the more firmly the correctness of the chief dates, and through them the intermediate ones. But such proofs of truth are lacking in the secular chronologies, and especially in periods of antiquity. All secular chronologies are mere guesses when they attempt to set dates for much more than a few hundred years before Christ.

The chronology of present truth is, to begin with, a string of dates, like other chronologies. That is to say, the dates are each known to be so many years before and after the succeeding and preceding dates, each step being proved by the most reliable evidence in existence. But if this were all the proof of the trustworthiness of the chronology, it could not truthfully be claimed to be more reliable than are the secular chronologies. Thus far, it is a chain, and no stronger than its weakest link.

There exist, however, well established relationships among the dates of present-truth chronology. These

internal connections of the dates impart a much greater strength than can be found in other chronologies. Some of them are of so remarkable a character as clearly to indicate that this chronology is not of man, but of God. Being of divine origin and divinely corroborated, present-truth chronology stands in a class by itself, absolutely and unqualifiedly correct.

### INCONTESTABLY ESTABLISHED

When a date is indicated by several lines of evidence it is strongly established. The scientific law of probabilities imparts a united strength to the strands of the cable of chronology far greater than the sum of the individual lines of evidence. This is a law which is implicitly relied upon in important affairs: viz., that when a thing is indicated in only one way it may be by chance; if it is indicated in two ways, it is almost certain to be true; and if in more than two ways, it is usually impossible that it is by chance, or that it is not true; and the addition of more proofs removes it entirely from the realm of chance into that of proven certainty.

This principle is applied daily in the weightiest matters in courts of law. The testimony of a single witness may be considered doubtful, but that of only two or three witnesses incontestably establishes the truth. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."—2 Corinthians 13:1.

In the chronology of present truth there are so many inter-relationships among the dates that it is not a mere string of dates, not a chain, but a cable of strands firmly knit together—a divinely unified system, with most of the dates having such remarkable relations with others as to stamp the system as not of human origin.

The automobile and the law of gravitation are two remarkable things. The one was invented by man; the other was discovered by man. Man invents man-made things, but discovers divinely-created principles. Present-truth chronology is not an invention; it is a discovery. The various discoveries, unite into a scientific system of chronology akin to the systems of science in physics, chemistry, radiology, and astronomy.

The matter of chronology becomes worthy of the close attention of able minds, because it supplies the data for a genuine philosophy of history. There is a science of history taught by able and highly educated professors in great universities, but in a vague and confused manner; for it is the attempt to reduce to order the utter confusion which demon control has made of human affairs in this present evil world. If such men find the extremely obscure philosophy which they teach, and concerning which they write in textbooks, worthy of a lifetime of study, how much more worthy of attention is the definite, clear-cut and truly scientific philosophy of history discernible in the chronological system of divine truth.

This genuine philosophy of history would now be taught in the institutions of higher education were it not for the fact that these institutions are dominated by the spirit of the evil one. It is aptly said by President David Starr Jordan, of Leland Stanford University, that education today is throttled by the hand of the dead past—i. e., by the tradition and influence of the dark ages of ignorance, superstition, apostasy, and demonism. The institutions of the past are perpetuated today in the unhallowed alliance of business, state and church; and it would not be to their interest to have the truth known, because it condemns this alliance.

Light, however, is breaking in upon even the benighted centers of "higher" learning, and is causing the abandonment of ancient notions in scientific lines, such as chemistry, physics, and astronomy, where the discoveries of the learned Hebrew, Einstein, and of other progressive scientists, have rendered impossible the retention of ideas that constituted what was considered advanced scientific ground only a few years ago. When the political and economic power of the unholy alliance is finally broken, as it will be in the near future, it will be possible for truth to have a hearing, and in many directions the alleged wisdom of men will be widely known to have been mere foolishness. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? . . . The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain [empty, profitless]."—1 Corinthians 1:20; 3:19, 20.

#### PROOF OF DIVINE ORIGIN

It will be clearly shown that present-truth chronology displays indisputable evidence of divine foreknowledge of the principle dates, and that this is proof of divine origin, and that the system is not a human invention but a discovery of divine truth.

The proof resides in the many connecting inter-relationships among the dates. Without these relations the chronology would not differ from secular systems, but with them we believe that it bears the stamp of approval of Almighty God.

Jehovah had outlined the times and seasons of things to come, and had them recorded ages in advance. He says: "Who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them." Through the prophet Daniel, Jehovah declared by the voice of an angel: "Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for *at the time appointed* the end shall be." He said again through Daniel: "A thing was revealed unto Daniel . . . and the thing was true, but *the time appointed* was long"; and "It is yet for a *time appointed*. . . that that is *determined* shall be done."—Isaiah 44:7; Daniel 8:19; 10:1; 11:35, 36.

These appointed times and seasons are in the power of Jehovah alone. They may not be ascertained, known

or recognized, even after they have been fulfilled, without divine guidance and the unction of the holy spirit of God. Of this the Word of God says: "He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: he revealeth the deep and secret things"; and, "It is not for you [now] to know [all] the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power [to know] after the Holy Spirit is come upon you"; and "Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly. . . . Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of light [wisdom], and the children of the day."—Daniel 2:21, 22; Acts 1:7, 8; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5.

Therefore it would be impossible for a natural man, or even a spirit being, be he an angel or a devil, to know in advance all the appointed times which the Father has kept secret from all except his begotten and anointed children. "The prophets have inquired and searched diligently. . . searching what, or what manner of *time*, the Spirit of God which was in them did signify. . . which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Peter 1:10-12) Especially would it be beyond the bounds of possibility for the evil one to discern in advance the dates, ages, and marvelous connecting links of the true chronology; for these, when disclosed by God, are to be known first only by the true church, to whom God has given of his spirit. (Ephesians 3:10; Revelation 1:4) The demons occasionally may make shrewd guesses as to events to come within a brief future; but it is entirely beyond their power to see such matters far in advance, except as distinctly revealed by God through the church. Astrologers sometimes make predictions as to coming events; but when these predictions prove to be correct, it is found that they have previously been discussed or published among the Lord's people. The annual forecasts of prominent seeresses are demonstrated to be woefully poor guesses, when checked up at the end of the periods covered. If the devil, "the strong man," had known when Christ was coming to bind him and spoil his organization, he would have been prepared for the event. But he was not prepared; and now his affairs are being rapidly overturned, because he could not know beforehand the divinely appointed time of something so important to him.—Mark 3:27.

#### FOREKNOWLEDGE IN CHRONOLOGY

If in a system of chronology there can be shown to have been a foreknowledge of coming events and seasons, it must be conceded to have been of divine origin. This can be shown to be true of present-truth chronology alone, which stamps it as of heavenly origin.

In the true chronology the many connecting strands are proof of the fact that God foreknew the dates and the events so interwoven with one another.

Many of the inter-relationships of dates are what are termed parallelisms.



Parallel dates are two series of dates a certain number of years apart, and marked by events of corresponding character. The intervening period is usually some significant number of years, such as 1845 or 2520. The connected events are always prominent and readily discerned.

The number 1845 is significant because it is the number of years in the parallel Jewish and gospel ages. It was 1845 years from the death of Jacob in 1813 B. C. (probably Fall) to the death of Jesus in 33 A. D. (Spring). Important events which took place in the gospel age, and which were preceded by similar events 1845 years before, in the Jewish age, occur at corresponding times in the two ages. If the two ages were laid one upon the other, all the parallel dates would coincide in position.

The second fall of the Jewish civilization, beginning in 69 A. D., is a parallel of the beginning of the fall of the Christian civilization in 1914; for the events are 1845 years apart and are alike prominent and readily discernible.

It is not so well known that there are other corresponding events on parallel dates 2520 years apart, making a series or system of parallelisms. The "times of the gentiles" are known to all Bible students (Daniel 4: 16, 23, 25, 32), as marked by the fall of Jerusalem at the beginning (606 B. C.), and by the beginning of the fall of Christendom at the close (1914 A. D.). These took place 2520 years apart, and are parallel events on parallel dates.

The division of the Hebrew nation, for example, into two kingdoms, Judah the two tribes and Israel the ten tribes, is an event corresponding to the division of Christendom into two great religious dominions, Protestantism the smaller and purer, and Romanism the larger and more corrupt. The first was in 999 B. C. and the second in 1521 A. D., just 2520 years apart. That there should be two such similar events is nothing remarkable; but it is extraordinary that they should take place just 2520 years apart, when it is known that the times of the gentiles are a period of 2520 years. If

one had occurred in China and the other in America, it would be nothing noticeable; but it becomes noteworthy that one was in nominal natural Israel and the other in nominal spiritual Israel, and that the first is plainly the type of the second.

Parallelisms of this nature are proof of divine origin of present-truth chronology, because they show foreknowledge. In the instance cited, the division of Israel and that of Christendom, 2520 years apart, are evidence that when the first division was permitted, the latter one was foreknown. This is true because of the relationship between the two events as regards both time and nature.

When it is found that there is a series or system of parallel dates composed of pairs of dates 2520 years apart, the foreknowledge becomes obvious. It would be absurd to claim that the relationship discovered was not the result of divine arrangement. God alone has such foreknowledge, and this proves that he so overruled times and events that they should be knit together into a beautiful and harmonious whole too sublime to be the result of chance or of human invention.

"Let *them* bring forth, and shew us what shall happen," says Jehovah; "let *them* shew [even] the former things [historical events which have become lost to human knowledge], what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things to come. Shew us the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.... Behold, *ye* are of nothing, and *your* work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth *you*." "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done."—Isaiah 41: 22-24; 46: 9, 10.

Those that follow Jehovah's chronology are manifestly his people; for, said Jesus Christ, "The Spirit of truth... will guide you into all truth; he will shew *you* things to come"; and "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his *servants* things which must shortly come to pass."—John 16: 13; Revelation 1: 1.

## IDENTIFICATION CERTIFICATES

**I**T WILL be necessary for those attending the Cedar Point Convention to have an identification certificate to present to the local ticket-agent when purchasing their tickets; for without such a certificate it will be impossible to secure the reduced transportation rate of a fare and a half. Ticket agents are instructed by the railway companies to allow the special rate only in cases where a certificate identifies the party as one entitled to the rate because of their going to the Convention at Cedar Point, Ohio.

We desire to know as soon as possible how many will attend the convention. Therefore we request every one who is intending to go, to write us to that effect, and

ask for an identification certificate. We will mail these certificates to all friends applying for them; but we must first know, in ample time, to whom we are to mail them.

In the case of a family it is not necessary to have a separate certificate for each member; for one certificate will answer for all the family, provided they all purchase their tickets at the same time at the same station. If, for example, a family of five is going, and three are to get their tickets together and the other two together at another time, then two certificates are necessary, one for the group of three, one for the group of two. If one member of the family has to purchase his ticket alone,